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60th ANNIVERSARY

The Heroes, The Villains & Strange New Worlds That Made Star Trek A Science Fiction Legend

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A formula made in heaven: a devoted fan base eager for more of the franchise featuring the original characters, a talented new cast and a compelling story.

94 2016 STAR TREK BEYOND
Fifty years after the birth of the franchise, the last film of the franchise was released. Though rumors abound of a new one in the works, this blockbuster remains the last of its kind.

IT'S BEEN 60 YEARS since the crew of the USS Enterprise invited American TV viewers "to boldly go where no man has gone before." "Star Trek" debuted on September 8, 1966, with a multiracial, multiethnic crew — including a half-human, half-alien — in one of the first science-fiction series ever to air on network TV. Although the show was canceled after 79 episodes, its popularity exploded through syndication. Today, millions of Trekkies worldwide attend annual conventions to talk about all things "Star Trek." There have been animated "Star Trek" shows — as well as new generations of starship travelers in later "Star Trek" spinoffs — and 13 feature films , plus 2025's streaming movie, "Star Trek: Section 31." The show's cult-like following has ensured that beloved characters such as Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock will remain an indelible part of American entertainment history for years to come. Delve deep into the "Star Trek" galaxy… exploring every facet of the phenomenon. Beam us up, Scotty…we're ready to blast off!

TO BOLDLY GO WHERE NO MAN HAS GONE BEFORE

"Star Trek" was the genius of Gene Roddenberry, an airline pilot-turned-LAPD speechwriter who envisioned a TV show about a multi-ethnic crew traveling aboard an airship.

THE CREATOR OF "Star Trek," Gene Roddenberry, followed an unlikely path to intergalactic success.

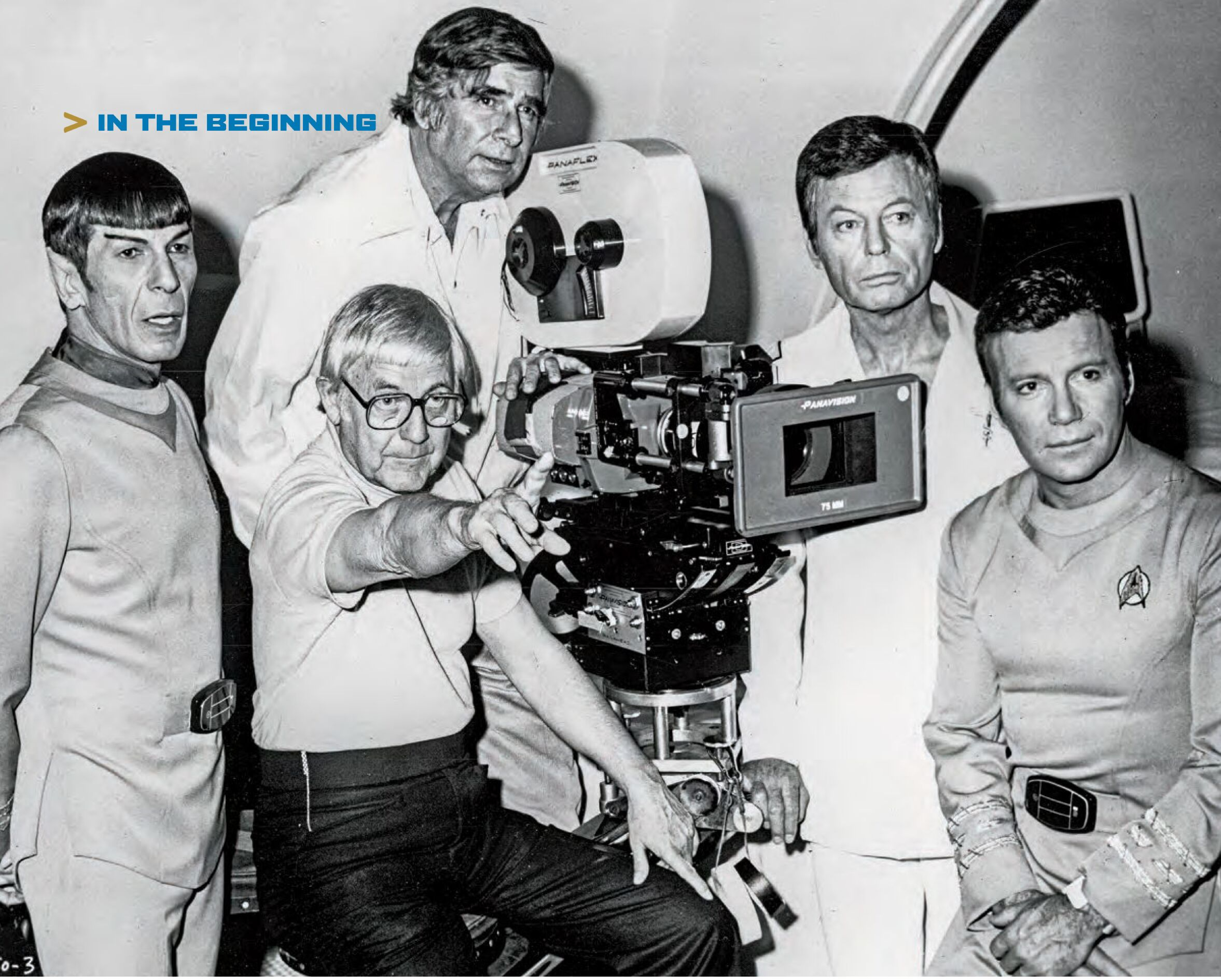
As a member of the Army Air Forces, he flew combat missions during World War II and later worked as a pilot for a commercial airlines before joining the Los Angeles Police Department. An avid reader since childhood, he began dabbling in freelance television writing.

Roddenberry, who was born in El Paso, Texas, in 1921 but moved to Los Angeles as a toddler, proved to be a gifted scribe with a knack for crafting interesting story lines, and by 1956, he found himself struggling to juggle his role as the LAPD's chief speech writer with the TV shows he was scripting. So he retired from the police force to pursue his one true passion — writing.

Although he worked on a multitude of projects, Roddenberry longed to write science fiction. He envisioned a TV show about a multi-ethnic crew traveling aboard an airship, based on the 1961 film "Master of the World." He discussed the idea with a fellow writer at MGM, but it was decided that audiences at the time wouldn't have much interest in science fiction.

Just three years later, the entertainment climate was changing. Although MGM passed on Roddenberry's "Star Trek" concept, he was undeterred. In April 1964, he took his idea to Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz's studio, Desilu Productions. Ball, who was heading up the studio after

> The series became one of the biggest cult phenomena in TV history. <



"Star Trek" rocketed the careers of Leonard Nimoy (left), DeForest Kelley (just right of the camera) and William Shatner (far right), thanks to creator Gene Roddenberry (top) and director Robert Wise (second from left).

her personal and professional split from Desi, was intrigued and the studio signed Roddenberry to a three-year contract in program development.

The deal would turn out to be as beneficial to Desilu as it was for Roddenberry. At the time Roddenberry came knocking on the studio's door, Desilu was struggling financially. It had been five years since the company had sold a pilot to the networks. The only successful show in the studio's stable was "I Love Lucy."

But that was all about to change.

Roddenberry, along with Desilu's Vice President of Production, Oscar Katz, took the series first to CBS. The network wasn't interested, but only because they already had a science fiction show in development — "Lost in Space."

This was encouraging news, and the two then presented "Star Trek" to the head of NBC's West Coast programming, Grant Tinker. He ordered a pilot episode, which featured actor Jeffrey Hunter as Captain Christopher Pike and Leonard Nimoy as Spock, although the character was markedly different in the initial pilot than he would be in the rest of the series. The network ultimately rejected the pilot, calling it "too cerebral."

But the game wasn't over yet. In an unusual move, NBC commissioned a second pilot. Although network executives hadn't liked the first pilot, they were still very interested in the "Star Trek" concept.

The second pilot was revamped with William Shatner as Captain James T. Kirk at the helm of the Enterprise. Spock was the only character from the first pilot to appear in the second. Actress Majel Barrett, who was in a relationship with Roddenberry and later married him, was the only other cast member from the first pilot to later appear in the series, although her role changed from First Officer "Number One" to Nurse Christine Chapel.

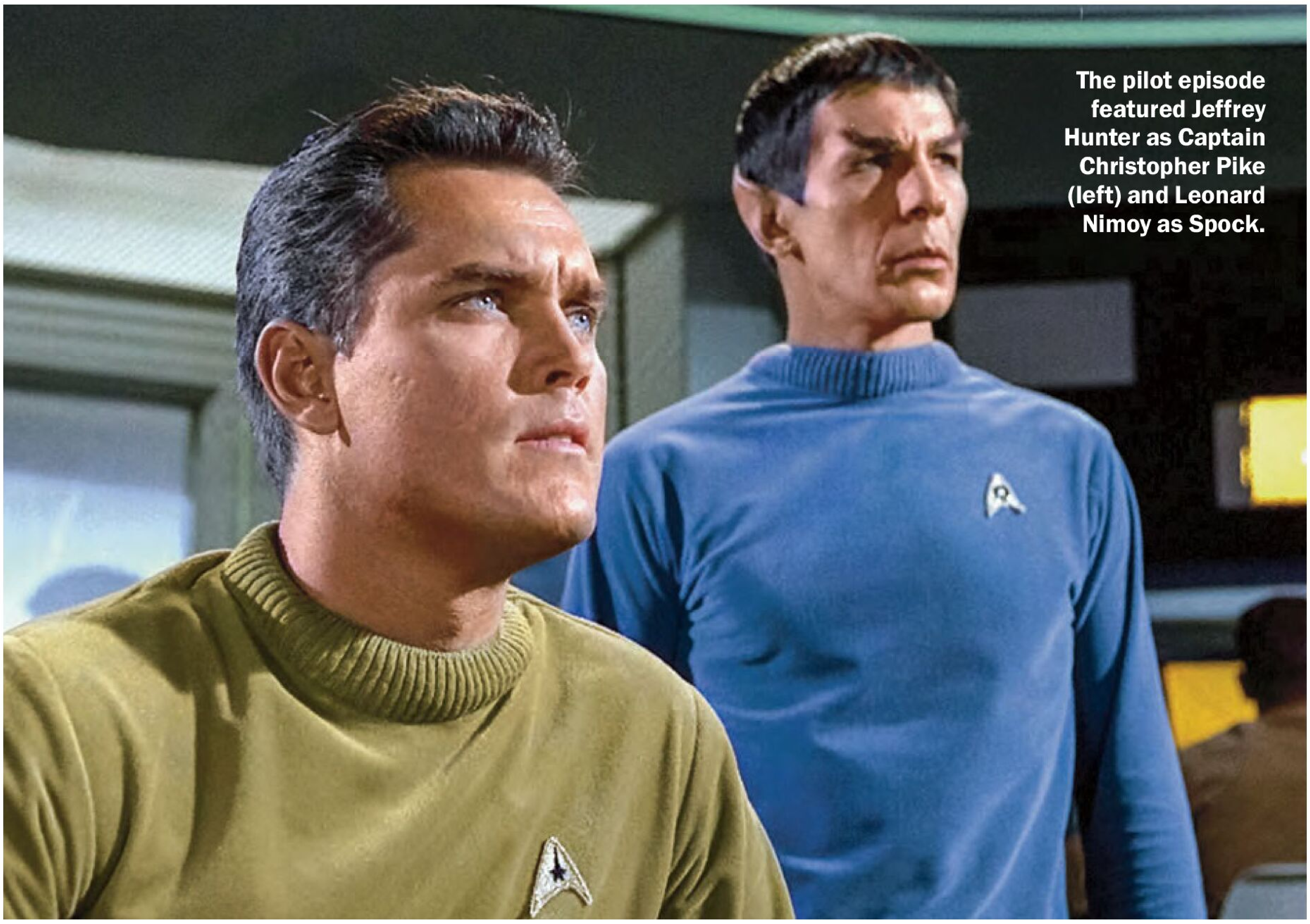
This pilot proved satisfactory, and NBC ordered 16 episodes, the first of which, "The Man Trap," aired on September 8, 1966. The initial ratings were high, but they began to fall in the series' second season.

NBC threatened to cancel, but the show was renewed for a third season thanks to a letter-writing campaign initiated by devoted fans. NBC, however, moved "Star Trek" from its prime Thursday night slot to Friday — essentially the kiss of death in TV land.

Roddenberry quit his role as producer in protest and was replaced by Fred Freiberger, who oversaw the series' third and final season.

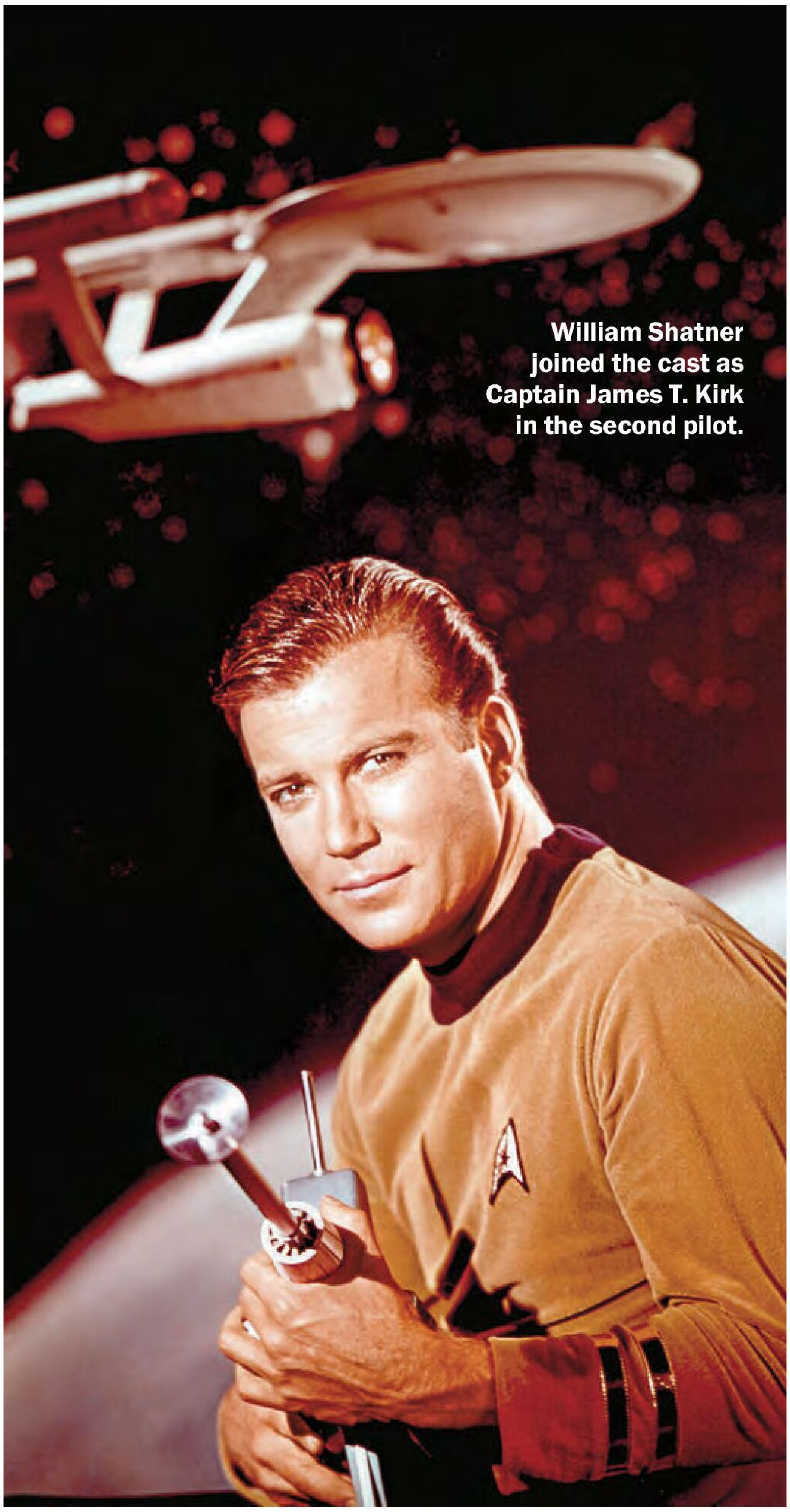
After 79 episodes, it appeared to be the end of the USS Enterprise's voyage. Little did anyone know at the time that

1ST PILOT "THE CAGE" 1965



The pilot episode featured Jeffrey Hunter as Captain Christopher Pike (left) and Leonard Nimoy as Spock.

2ND PILOT "WHERE NO MAN HAS GONE BEFORE" 1965



William Shatner joined the cast as Captain James T. Kirk in the second pilot.

the series was about to take on a life of its own to become one of the biggest cult phenomena in TV history.

Paramount Studios bought the series from Desilu, and "Star Trek" began airing in reruns in the fall of 1969. The show quickly became more popular than it had been during its original airing, evidenced by several thousand fans attending the first "Star Trek" convention in New York City in 1972.

Today, annual conventions are held around the world.

By the late 1970s, the original "Star Trek" series was airing in 150 markets throughout the United States and in 60 international markets. Because of renewed interest in the series, the franchise was revived.

Before long, there were animated series and motion pictures, books, comics and video games, as well as a second series, "Star Trek: The Next Generation," which aired from 1987 to 1994.

Although Roddenberry played an active part in developing "The Next Generation," his declining health forced him to limit his role in the series after its first season.

"Star Trek" became a cultural force much larger than Roddenberry ever could have imagined — and his contribution to television history did not go unrecognized.

In 1985, Roddenberry became the first TV writer to be honored with a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. He was also inducted into both the Science Fiction Hall of Fame and the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame.

And as a final tribute to the "Star Trek" creator, Roddenberry's ashes were sent into orbit in outer space after his 1991 death.

1ST EPISODE "THE MAN TRAP" 1966

From left: Uhura, (Nichelle Nichols), Captain James T. Kirk (Shatner) and Spock (Nimoy) on board the USS Enterprise in the premiere episode of "Star Trek."

> The second pilot proved to be satisfactory and initial ratings for the first episode were high. <

WILLIAM SHATNER

The Iconic Captain Kirk

William Shatner has made no secret of his love/hate relationship with the character who was at the helm of the USS Enterprise.

He's acted on the stage and in films, written books, recorded albums, directed, produced, won numerous awards and has become one of TV's most recognizable pitchmen, but William Shatner will best be remembered for his three-year run on television over a half-century ago — as "Star Trek's" Captain James T. Kirk.

It's been both a blessing and a curse for the 95-year-old: The role certainly made him a superstar, but 60 years later, fans still expect him to be Captain Kirk.

"Over the years, I've become barraged by comments from people, such as, 'Beam me up, Scotty!' and I became defensive," he once said. "I felt they were derisive and engendered an attitude. I am grateful for the success, but didn't want to be mocked."

Shatner was born in Montreal in 1931 and began his showbiz career as a child on Canadian radio programs. He pursued acting throughout college, performing with the Royal Mount Theater Company during the summer.

He made his Broadway debut in 1956 and continued to appear on the stage while also pursuing roles in television. In 1958, he landed a role in the MGM film "The Brothers Karamazov" with Yul Brynner.

Throughout the remainder of the 1950s and early '60s, Shatner was never at a loss for work. With his personal

> The role made him a superstar…it's been both a blessing and a curse. <

William Shatner played Captain James T. Kirk, a role that ultimately typecast him in the television industry.

Before "Star Trek," Shatner took on small roles, including this one in 1958's "Old Marshals Never Die."

Shatner (second from left) starred as Sergeant T.J. Hooker in the hit '80s TV show "T.J. Hooker."

mantra, "Work equals work," he accepted roles that some of his contemporaries might have declined. And while he kept busy, it's been said the decision not to be more discerning may have hindered his career at the time.

Indeed, Shatner may never have been offered the gig as Captain Kirk if NBC had accepted the first pilot Desilu presented for "Star Trek," which starred someone else in the captain's chair. When casting the second pilot, Shatner was tapped to help the USS Enterprise — and the rest is TV history.

Although the series only ran for three seasons, the hectic filming schedule took a toll on Shatner's personal life. He and his first wife, Canadian actress Gloria Rand, with whom he has three daughters, separated during "Star Trek's" run and divorced in 1969.

Shatner's visibility continued after the cancellation of "Star Trek" thanks to syndication. But it was a mixed blessing. For several years in the early 1970s, the actor had a tough time finding work because he was so closely associated with the role of Kirk that he found he had been typecast in the industry.

He lost his home and began working odd jobs to support his family. "I now had three children and an ex-wife to support, and I was just about broke," he recalled in 2008. "I even lived out of a pickup truck for a while.

"I needed to earn money, fast.... After 'Star Trek,' I made some awful movies."

But the "Star Trek" TV show inexpicably began to be more popular than when it originally aired as fans around the globe started tuning in to reruns, and it quickly gained a cult following.

"For reasons that many wise men have tried for many years to explain, 'Star Trek' eventually became arguably the best-known, most enduring and influential television series ever produced," Shatner said. "At the core of it there was one simple truth: It was fun.

"'Star Trek' became a sun with great gravitational pull that drew people to it, where they could meet other people just like themselves — wearing costumes."

Eventually, Shatner resigned himself to the fact that he would always be Captain Kirk to fans — albeit somewhat reluctantly — and in 1975, he attended his first "Star Trek" convention. The money, he says, was "out of this world."

Shatner's love/hate relationship with the character and show that made him famous has continued ever since. He appeared in seven "Star Trek" films between 1979 and 1994 and has said he wouldn't mind appearing as an aged Kirk in an upcoming film. Yet he finds the devotion of Trekkies somewhat disconcerting.

In fact, at one point, he stopped attending conventions altogether. "I didn't want anything to do with a group of obsessives who paid to get together to talk incessantly about a TV show that had been cancelled," he explained. "It wasn't logical."

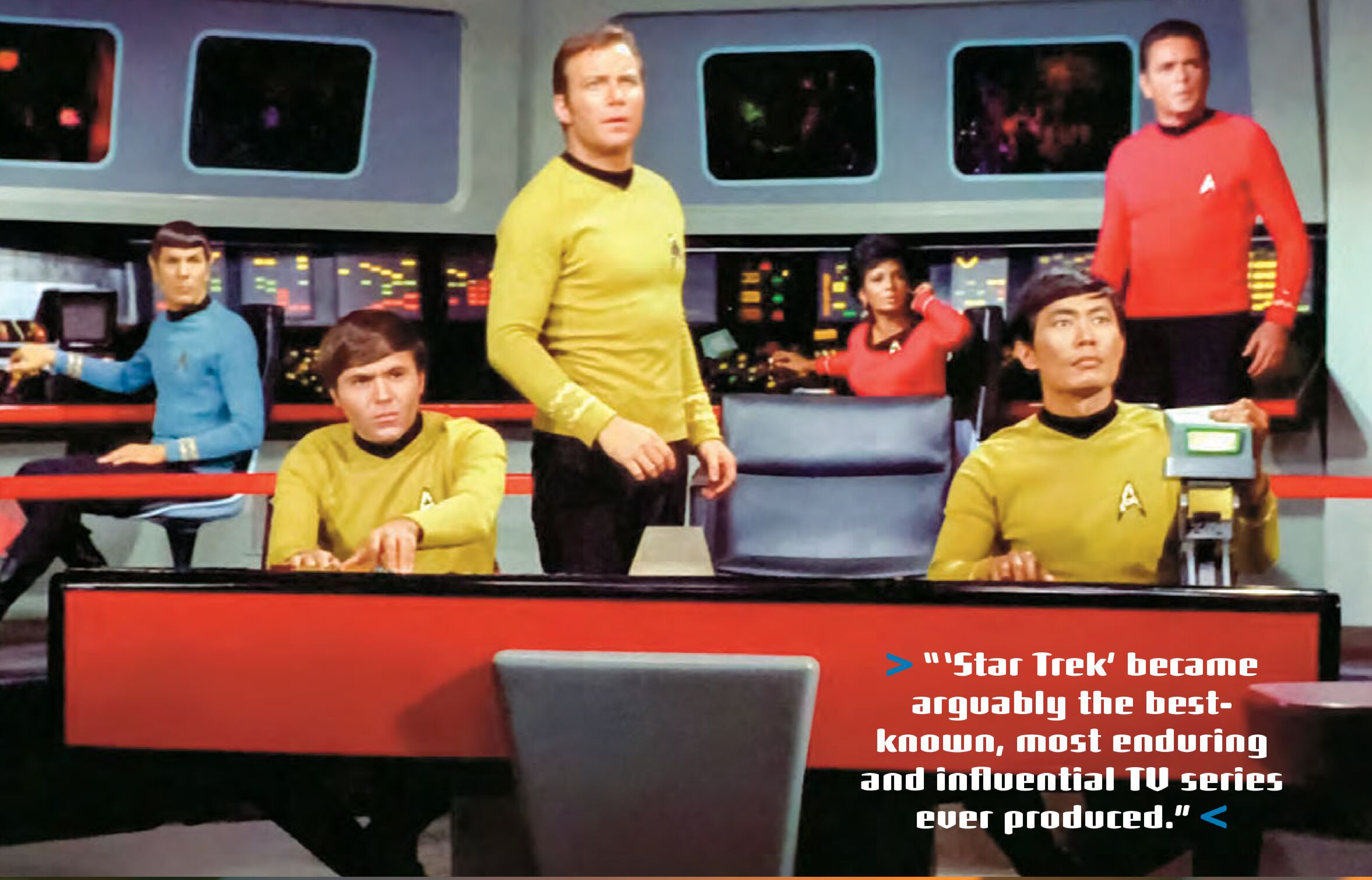
Shatner has gone on to appear in several stage productions, movies and TV shows, including the lead role in "T.J. Hooker" in the early 1980s. In 2021, at age 90, he became the oldest person to fly into space, famously noting that it filled him with a sense of grief.

He's also written several books, his most recent about his long-standing friendship with Leonard Nimoy.

Sadly, the two had a falling out a few years before Nimoy passed away in February 2015. Shatner says he still carries "feelings of devastation" that the conflict was left unresolved. The actor maintains contact with Nimoy's family, however, and helped Nimoy's son with a documentary about his father.

His personal life has seen its up and downs throughout the years. His marriage to second wife Marcy Lafferty ended in divorce after 23 years, and his third wife, Nerine Kidd, an alcoholic, drowned in the couple's backyard swimming pool in 1999. He married his fourth wife Elizabeth Anderson Martin in 2001, divorced in 2020 and are now reconciled.

Despite his somewhat reluctant ties to "Star Trek," Shatner has no regrets. "Regret is the worst human emotion," he has said. "If you took another road, you might have fallen off a cliff. I'm content."



> "'Star Trek' became arguably the best-known, most enduring and influential TV series ever produced." <

Although Shatner has somewhat reluctant ties to "Star Trek," he has no regrets.

LEONARD NIMOY

"I Am Spock"

Leonard Nimoy helped develop his classic character, even creating the Vulcan nerve pinch and salute based on a Jewish blessing.

LEONARD NIMOY BROUGHT to life one of the most indelible characters in modern culture — "Star Trek's" Mr. Spock, the thoughtful and stoic pointy-eared Vulcan, the only alien crew member aboard the USS Enterprise.

Born in Boston in 1931, Nimoy dreamed of becoming an actor since childhood and began appearing in productions in his neighborhood's children's theater at age 8. He continued to win roles at the local community college during his high school years. He turned down a scholarship to Boston College — much to the horror of his parents — and set off to pursue a career in show business in 1949.

Three years later, he scored the title role in the film "Kid Monk Baroni," but it didn't bring Nimoy the success he had anticipated. After serving in the Army for a two-year stint, he returned to California to pursue acting again, and for the next decade, landed little more than small parts in film and TV.

"Before Star Trek, I spent about 15 years in Los Angeles looking for work as an actor, and during that time, I never had a job that lasted any longer than two weeks," he later recalled.

To make ends meet, he worked a series of odd jobs — as a cab driver, a movie theater usher and an exotic fish salesman, to name just a few.

"I went a long time before I could make a living as an actor," he said.

—M

Leonard Nimoy's first leading television role was the half-human, half-alien Mr. Spock.

Spock was such a hit with viewers that NBC asked the show's writers to feature the character in every episode.

> Tension formed between the two actors when Nimoy's Spock became the focus of the show. <

Their friendship had its ups and downs, but William Shatner (right) "loved him like a brother."

Nimoy had a hard time dealing with his frustration and often thought about quitting acting altogether, but his wife Sandi, to whom he was married from 1954 to 1987, encouraged him to stick it out.

Then, in 1964, while he was teaching method acting classes at his own studio, the call came to read for a part in a new sci-fi TV show that was filming a pilot for NBC. Gene Roddenberry was convinced that in Nimoy, he had found the perfect actor to portray the half-human, half-alien Mr. Spock. It would be Nimoy's first leading role.

The pilot, "The Cage," was refused by NBC, but they asked Roddenberry and production studio Desilu to film a second pilot, based on the script "Where No Man Has Gone Before." The original cast of characters was scrapped — except for Nimoy in his role as Spock. NBC put "Star Trek" on its Thursday night lineup after seeing the second pilot.

Spock was a huge hit with viewers. He received more fan mail than any other actor on the show — including William Shatner — and NBC asked the show's writers to feature Spock in every episode.

Nimoy played an enormous part in the development of the Spock character. He created both the signature Vulcan nerve pinch and salute, the latter based on an Orthodox Jewish blessing that he had learned in the synagogue as a child.

"In Spock, I finally found the best of both worlds: to be widely accepted in public approval and yet be able to continue to play the insulated alien through the Vulcan character," he said.

Shatner was initially displeased that Nimoy's Spock seemed to become the focus of the show, and there was tension between the two actors in the beginning. But the pair eventually bonded and became close friends.

The friendship continued after the series ended, and only then did Shatner learn that Nimoy was struggling with an alcohol addiction.

In his book, "Leonard: My Fifty-Year Friendship With a Remarkable Man," Shatner writes that Nimoy later admitted to having his assistant bring him drinks to the set in a paper cup. Although it began with just a glass of wine or a single cocktail after work, the alcohol quickly became a problem.

"If I drank a little, I ended up drinking a lot. And within a matter of a year or two, I developed a major problem with alcohol. It reached the point where I could no longer control how much I was drinking," Shatner recalls Nimoy telling him.

After "Star Trek," Nimoy joined the cast of "Mission: Impossible" for two seasons and continued to appear on TV and the stage. He also remained connected to the "Star Trek" franchise, appearing in several of the films. He tried his hand behind the camera, directing two of the "Star Trek" films, as well as the highest-grossing film of 1987, "Three Men and a Baby."

Like Shatner, Nimoy had mixed feelings about being so closely associated with his "Star Trek" character, as evidenced by the titles of his autobiographies. In 1975, he penned "I Am Not Spock"; twenty years later, he wrote "I Am Spock."

Nimoy died at his Bel Air home on Feb. 27, 2015, at age 83, due to complications from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. There was a worldwide outpouring of grief when news of his passing spread, with tributes ranging from his former "Star Trek" cast mates to President Obama.

Although they'd had a falling out prior to Nimoy's death, Shatner wrote: "I loved him like a brother. We will all miss his humor, his talent and his capacity to love."

Beating The Odds

Starship helmsman, social justice activist and author — the sky was the limit for trailblazer George Takei.

“STAR TREK” FANS know him as Lt. Hikaru Sulu, the best helmsman in the galaxy, but George Takei has been in the front seat of more than just the USS Enterprise.

As an actor, director, author, activist and social media star, Takei, 79, has been blazing trails and beating the odds all his life.

Takei was born to Japanese-American parents in Los Angeles on April 20, 1937. When he was just 5 years old, at the beginning of World War II, armed soldiers arrived at his family’s front door and forced them to a Japanese internment camp in Arkansas.

“My mother said that was the most degrading, humiliating experience — the whole family forced at gunpoint, literally, to live in a narrow horse stall that still had the stench of manure,” Takei revealed.

The incident stuck with young George, and he’s made it a point throughout his career to quash stereotypes and to fight for social justice.

He knows just how lucky he was to land the role of Sulu on “Star Trek” in the 1960s; at the time, there were very few Asian faces on television. But Gene Roddenberry had insisted that the cast be diverse.

“I knew this character was a breakthrough role, certainly for me as an individual actor but also for the image of an Asian character: no accent, a member of the elite leadership team,” he said.

Takei continued to act after the series ended and appeared in six “Star Trek” films, as well as an episode of “Star Trek: Voyager,” among other TV roles.

Takei publicly revealed that he was gay in 2005. In 2008, he married his longtime partner Brad Altman, and he continues to be an advocate and activist for LGTBQ+ and immigrant rights.

DEFOREST KELLEY

The Real McCoy

DeForest Kelley had a choice of roles. He turned down the Spock character — and became the galaxy's most beloved doctor.

DEFOREST KELLEY WASN'T a big science fiction fan, but when Gene Roddenberry invited him to a screening of the first "Star Trek" pilot, Kelley was curious enough to accept.

After the screening, Kelley reportedly told Roddenberry: "Gene, that will be the biggest hit or biggest miss ever."

Roddenberry then offered Kelley a choice of two roles in the second pilot he was producing for NBC: a character Roddenberry described as "this green-painted alien" — Mr. Spock — or the starship's chief medical officer.

Kelley chose the latter and was an instant hit as Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy, the sarcastic and humanist counterpart to Leonard Nimoy's Spock.

Born the son of a Baptist minister in Toccoa, Georgia, in 1920, he left town after high school to visit an uncle in California and joined a theater group. He was discovered by a talent scout for Paramount Studios in the mid-1940s while he was working on a training film for the United States Navy. The scout gave Kelley a screen test, and the studio soon offered him a contract.

Over the next two decades, Kelley built up an impressive resume, appearing in dozens of films and TV shows. In 1964, he accepted the role that would change his life forever, as "Star Trek's" Dr. McCoy.

During the show's first season, Kelley's name was listed with the cast in the end credits; only William Shatner and Nimoy were listed in the opening credits. But because Dr. McCoy was so popular with fans, Kelley received third billing in "Star Trek's" opening credits in its second and third season.

Aside from movie appearances as Dr. McCoy, Kelley acted very little after "Star Trek" ended. He died of stomach cancer on June 11, 1999, in Los Angeles, with his wife of 54 years, Carolyn, by his side.

TV

STAR TREK

SPACE: The final frontier.
These are the voyages of
the starship Enterprise.
Its five-year mission: to explore
strange new worlds, to seek out
new life and new civilizations,
to boldly go where no man
has gone before.

1966-1969

STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES

The groundbreaking show included an ethnically diverse cast and television's first interracial kiss.

WITH THOSE NOW-FAMOUS words, "Space: The final frontier…" William Shatner introduced each episode of "Star Trek" as the starship Enterprise drifted across the television screen. Set in the Milky Way galaxy in the 2260s, the original "Star Trek" series followed the adventures of the ship's crew as they explored outer space and its civilizations.

The show featured Shatner as the charming Captain James T. Kirk, Leonard Nimoy as the cerebral, logical and stoic half-Vulcan/half-human first officer Mr. Spock and DeForest Kelley as the starship's quick-tempered but wise chief medical officer, Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy.

Other notable members of the cast included: Nichelle Nichols as Uhura, James Doohan as Scott, George Takei as Sulu, Eddie Paskey as Lieutenant Leslie, Walter Koenig as Chekov and Majel Barrett as Nurse Christine Chapel.

"Star Trek" was groundbreaking, particularly in terms of diversity. Creator Gene Roddenberry was committed to outfitting the starship with a multiethnic crew and, indeed, the cast represented actors from a variety of backgrounds.

But Roddenberry wanted more than just a diverse cast. He wanted to blaze new trails in what was acceptable on TV. The show is well-known for being the first scripted network TV program to feature an interracial kiss, between Captain Kirk and Lieutenant Uhura, in the episode "Plato's Stepchildren" in 1968.

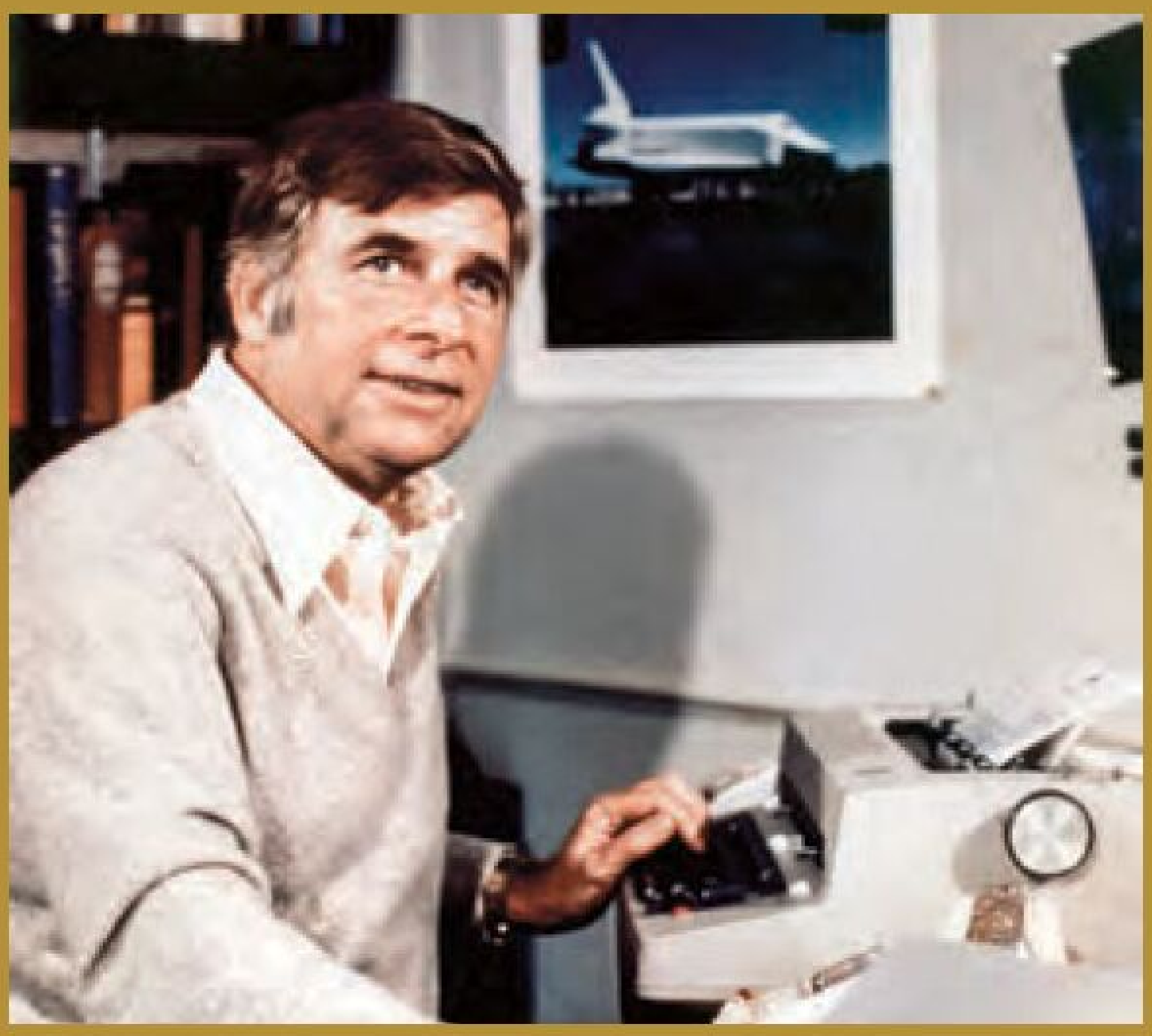
The show was also among the first science fiction series — after "Lost In Space" — to air on network TV. That delighted Roddenberry, but his hope

Viewers were first introduced to the characters of Mr. Spock (left) and Captain Kirk in "Star Trek's" original series.

> The show was among the first science fiction series to air on network TV. <

was that viewers would come away with the understanding of the show's deeper message.

He once said: "'Star Trek' was an attempt to say that humanity will reach maturity and wisdom on the day that it begins not just to tolerate, but take a special delight in differences in ideas and differences in life forms. ...If we cannot learn to actually enjoy those small differences, to take a positive delight in those small differences between our own kind, here on this planet, then we do not deserve to go out into space and meet the diversity that is almost certainly out there."

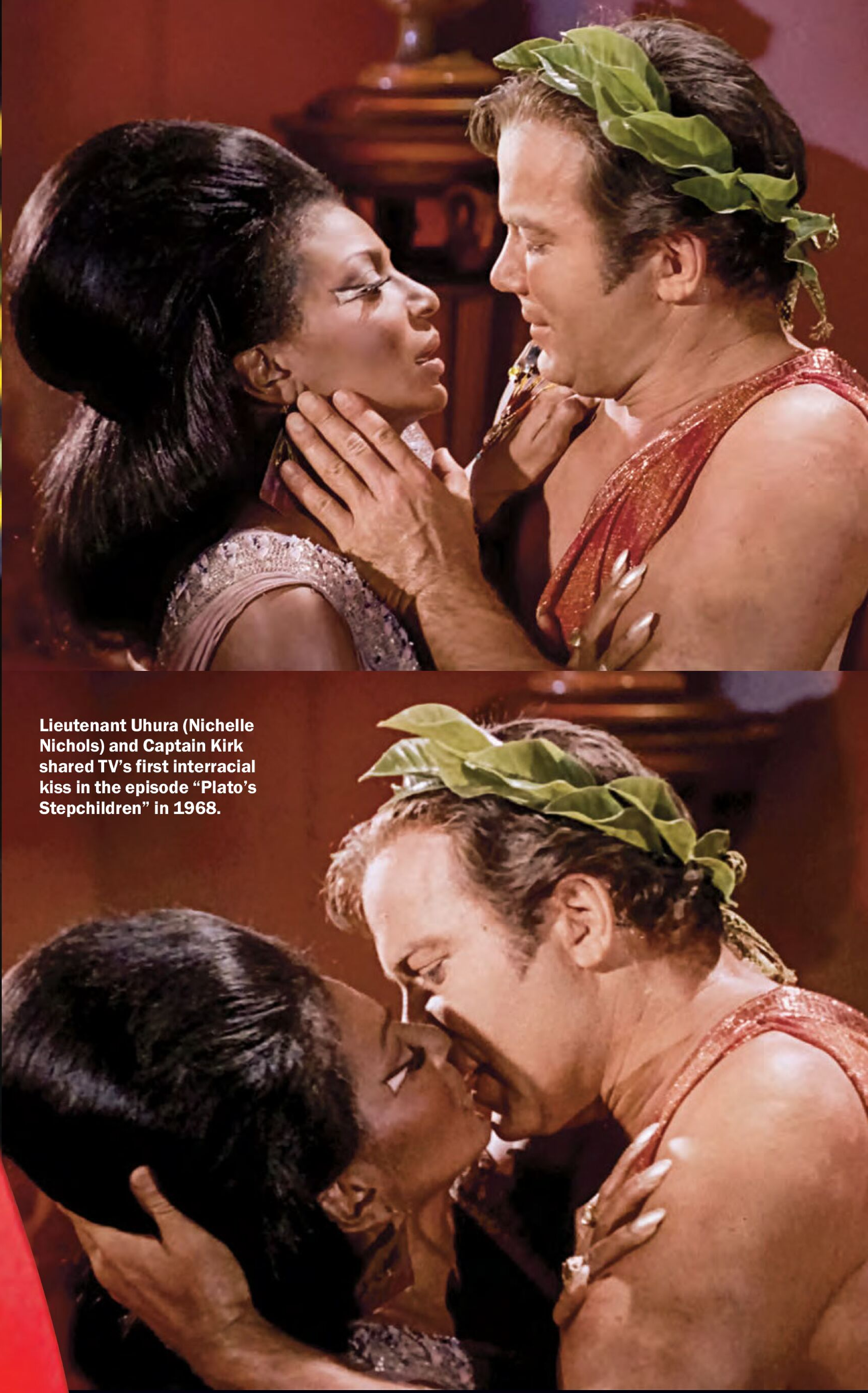


>TREK TRIVIA

- **Roddenberry wanted Spock's skin color to be dark red, but it would make his skin look black on the show's original black-and-white telecast. So his complexion was yellow-tinged instead, and then, eventually pink.**
- **The drawings for the USS Enterprise had a six-lane bowling alley on board, right next to the "Refreshments Area" and the "Food and Beverages Preparation Facility."**
- **That famous kiss between Uhura and Captain Kirk was originally intended for Spock. But Shatner demanded the TV's first interracial kiss belong to him.**
- **The show was so broke, it reused outdoor sets from "The Andy Griffith Show," particularly in the episodes "Miri" and "The City on the Edge of Forever." You can see Floyd's Barbershop, Mayberry Courthouse and Walker's Drugstore.**

The series followed the crew of the Enterprise, including Nurse Christine Chapel (Majel Barrett) and Dr. Leonard McCoy (DeForest Kelley, both top left) and Chekov (Walter Koenig, bottom right) as they explored outer space.

> The show was well-known for being the first scripted TV program to feature a romance between different races. <

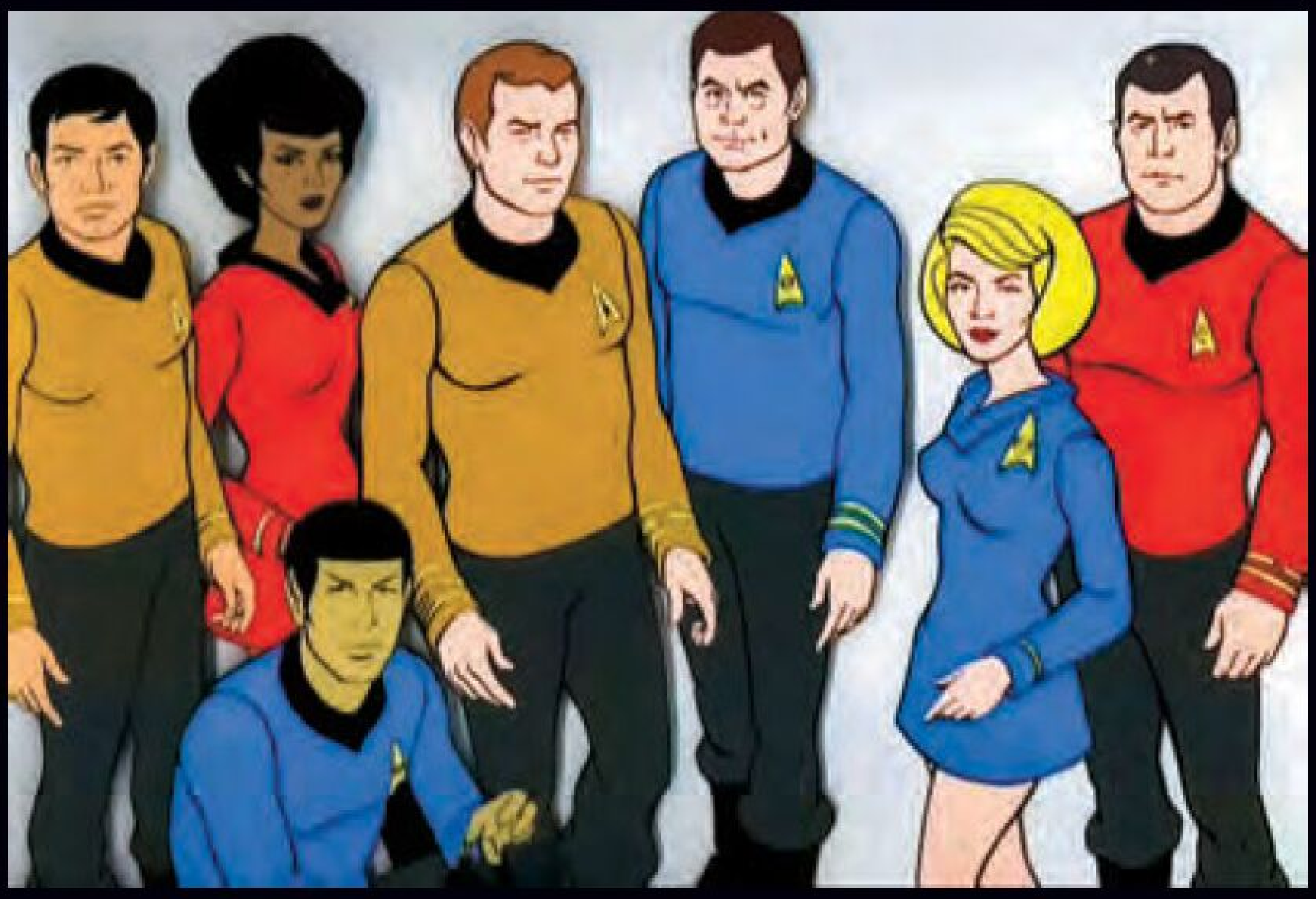


Lieutenant Uhura (Nichelle Nichols) and Captain Kirk shared TV's first interracial kiss in the episode "Plato's Stepchildren" in 1968.

1973-74

STAR TREK: THE ANIMATED SERIES

The original stars, including William Shatner, actually voiced their cartoon-like counterparts.



IT'S A QUESTION that may fool all but the most dedicated Trekkie — what was the first "Star Trek" show to win an Emmy?

The surprising answer was an episode of "The Animated Series" titled "How Sharper Than a Serpent's Tooth," which aired in 1973.

The animated sci-fi show was devised by producers as a Saturday morning cartoon to capitalize on the enduring success of the 1960s program.

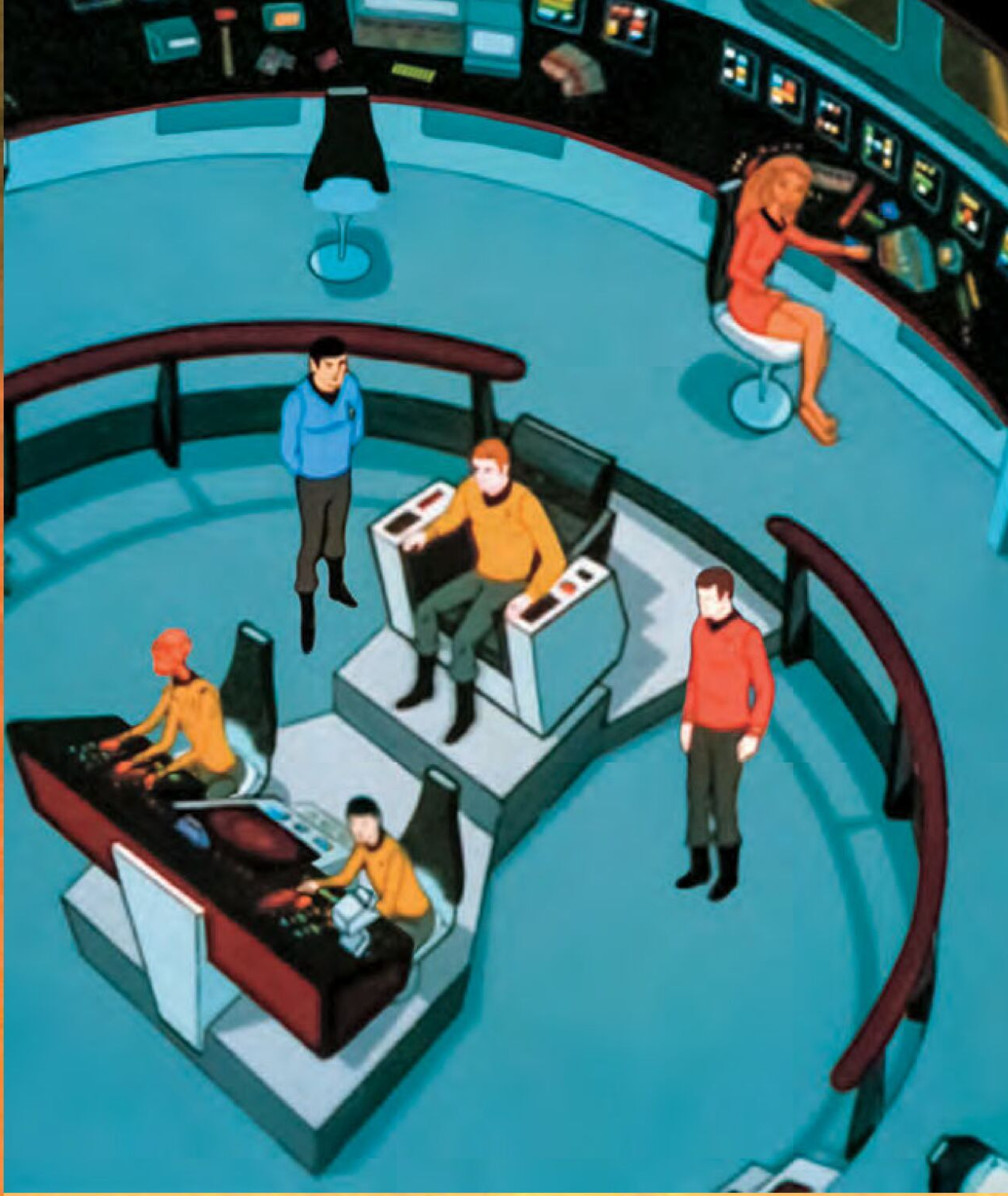
But this was no cheap knock-off. The original stars, including William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, James Doohan, Nichelle Nichols and George Takei, actually voiced their cartoon counterparts, and the episodes were critically acclaimed for the novel story lines and for using the visual freedom of animation to offer more outlandish alien action.

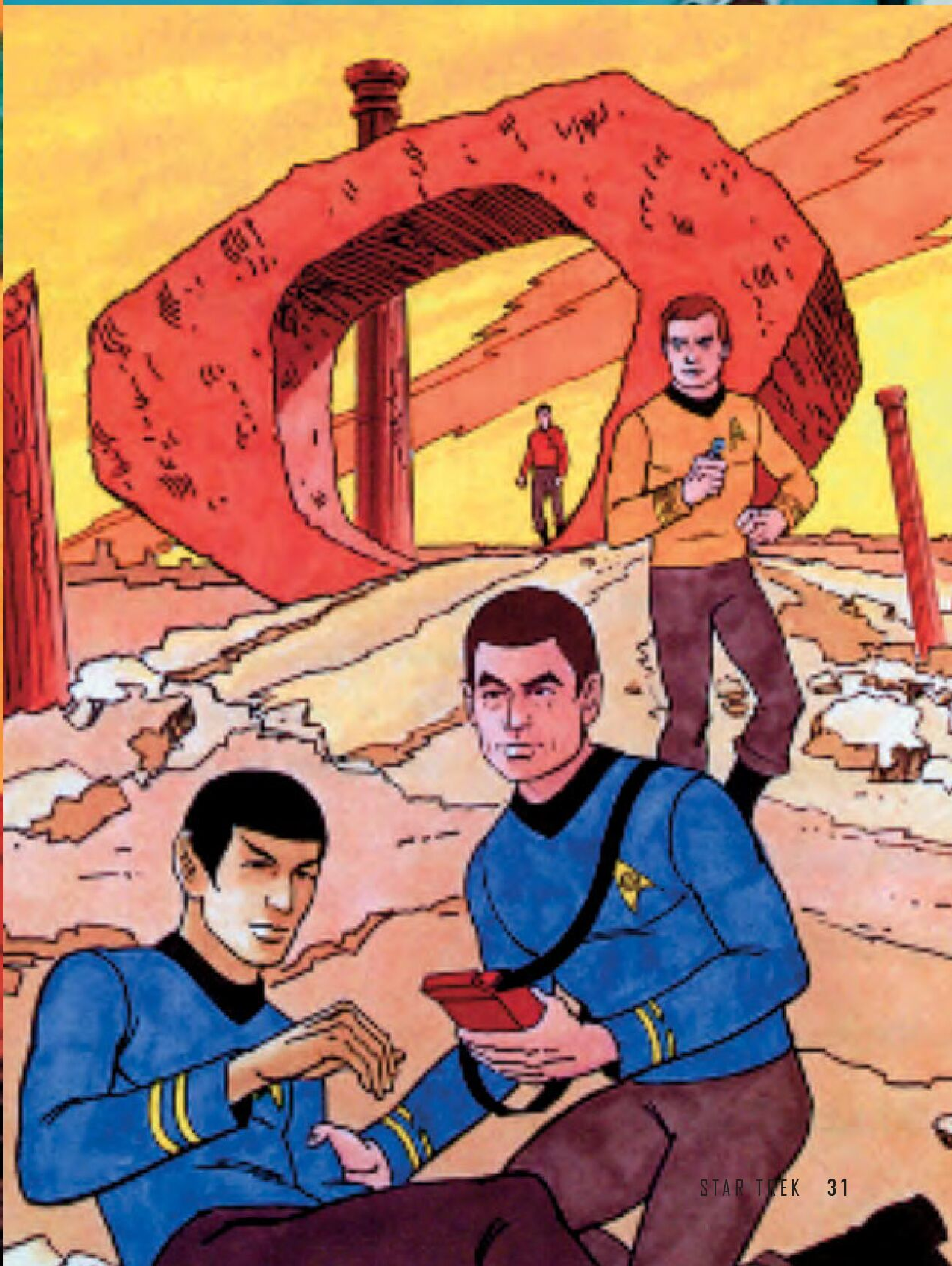
The series ran for two seasons on NBC, airing a total of 22 half-hour episodes.

Interestingly, Nimoy refused to take part unless Nichols and Takei were added to the cast, arguing that the characters of Sulu and Uhura were vital as they were proof of the ethnic diversity of the 23rd century and should not be recast.

"Spock" was also very aware that some of his acting colleagues hit financial trouble after the original series was canceled.

> The first “Star Trek” show to win an Emmy was an episode of “The Animated Series.” <





Producers devised an animated version of “Star Trek” to capitalize on the success of the original series.

1987-1994

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

The stars aligned with cameos from Whoopi Goldberg and Stephen Hawking.

SET IN 2364, 100 years after the first mission of the Starship Enterprise under the command of Captain James T. Kirk, the first follow-up series to the original prime-time show introduced an entirely new cast charged with exploring and seeking out new life for the Federation.

At the helm on the roller-coaster ride through even stranger new worlds was Patrick Stewart as the brooding Captain Jean-Luc Picard. The series, set in the Milky Way galaxy, premiered in September 1987 to an armchair audience on Earth of 27 million viewers with the two-hour pilot, "Encounter at Farpoint."

With co-stars Jonathan Frakes, LeVar Burton and Michael Dorn, the crew of the USS Enterprise may have looked different, but over seven seasons they faced a series of threats to the galaxy that had to be thwarted with the expected steely resolve. The Klingon Empire, the bane of Kirk's crew, were no longer archenemies but galactic allies, and the Romulans and the Borg were the threatening new bogeymen and women.

In 2012, "Entertainment Weekly" listed the show at No. 7 in the "25 Best Cult TV Shows from the Past 25 Years," saying, "The original 'Star Trek' was cult TV before cult TV was even a thing, but its younger, sleeker offspring brought, yes, a new generation into the Trekker fold and reignited the promise of sci-fi on television."

Bizarrely, the show's successful run ended despite the actors being contracted to make an eighth series, apparently because Paramount felt that the TV series would hurt the box office for the "Star Trek" movies it was planning using the same cast.

Captain Jean-Luc Picard is the commanding officer of Enterprise-D.

> The series “brought a new generation into the Trekker fold and reignited the promise of sci-fi on television.” <

Whoopi Goldberg, as Guinan, the El-Aurian bartender in the ship's lounge, was one of the more unexpected guest stars. Other cameos featured the likes of Kirsten Dunst, Kelsey Grammer, Stephen Hawking, Ashley Judd, Jean Simmons and John Tesh.

After 176 episodes, the finale "All Good Things..." aired in May 1994, but it was hardly the end. The series spawned three more "Star Trek" spin-offs over the next decade.

PATRICK STEWART

IF THE AMERICAN public was uncertain about chrome-domed British actor Patrick Stewart filling William Shatner's earnestly over-the-top shoes, the actor himself was positively skittish — he lived out of his suitcase in Los Angeles expecting at any moment to be put on a plane back across the Atlantic.

Stewart had trouble fitting in with his otherworldly counterparts. He related that his "spirits used to sink" when required to memorize and use the techie buzz words that were so crucial to the "Star Trek" script.

But he needn't have worried. The role made him rich and famous; after the TV series ended he portrayed Picard in four "Star Trek" films. Stewart paid the price in typecasting which made it difficult to return to the Shakespearian stage, but he insisted the highlight of his career was "The Next Generation" because "it changed everything for me."

"The fact is all of those years in Royal Shakespeare Company – playing all those kings, emperors, princes and tragic heroes — were nothing but preparation for sitting in the captain's chair of the Enterprise," he said.

Stewart, now 85, found more success later in his career as the Picard-like pivotal character of Professor Charles Xavier in the "X-Men" movie series.

> The first follow-up series introduced an entirely new cast charged with seeking out new life for the Federation. <

The cast of "The Next Generation": (top row, from left to right) Jonathan Frakes, Brent Spiner, Whoopi Goldberg, LeVar Burton, Michael Dorn; (bottom row, left to right) Marina Sirtis, Patrick Stewart and Gates McFadden.

1993-1999

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

"DS9" was the first spin-off where the show's creator wasn't involved.

IN "STAR TREK: Deep Space Nine," the crew didn't boldly go anywhere: They were living on a space station rather than a starship.

"DS9," which premiered in 1993 and ran for seven seasons, was the first spin-off created without any direct involvement from creator Gene Roddenberry. He did give the project his blessing just before he died in 1991.

The baton was handed over while "Star Trek: The Next Generation" was still on air — one of the reasons the new show was given a different, static location. "DS9" quickly established itself as another ratings hit.

In orbit around the planet Bajor, DS9 was jointly run by the United Federation of Planets and the Bajorans, who had finally liberated themselves from the brutal Cardassian occupation. The idea was that the station would be a focus for research and interstellar trade positioned as it was at the mouth of the newly discovered Bajoran wormhole, gateway to the mysterious, unexplored Gamma Quadrant.

But DS9 quickly becomes a target for rival alien species who covet the space station's strategically important position at the crossroads to a new world.

Inevitably, the starship is drawn into an all-out war against the Dominion, a powerful hierarchy of three separate species, the xenophobic Changelings, the Vorta and the Jem'Hadar.

The series was notable for starring Avery Brooks as Benjamin Sisko, the first and only African-American captain in a leading role in the televised incarnations of "Star Trek."

> Deep Space Nine was jointly run by the United Federation of Planets and the Bajorans. <

DS9 was a target for rival aliens who coveted the space station's position.

The personality conflicts on the space station — an element that Roddenberry had steered away from in previous shows — offered a richer depth to the 24th century drama. Miles O'Brien and, later, Worf were two characters imported from "The Next Generation."

In the second half of its run, "DS9" aired at the same time as "Star Trek: Voyager" and the story lines occasionally overlapped, a dynamic that worked well for fans in the United States but not so well in other countries, like Great Britain, where they insisted on running one series at a time.

AVERY BROOKS

AVERY BROOKS BEAT 100 other actors from all racial backgrounds to take the helm of "Deep Space Nine" as the first African-American to lead a "Star Trek" TV series.

So popular was he as Captain Benjamin Sisko that the role remains his most well-known in a varied and successful career.

Born October 2, 1948, Brooks also starred as Hawk on "Spenser: For Hire" and its spin-off "A Man Called Hawk" and as Dr. Bob Sweeney in the Oscar-nominated "American History X."

Before joining the crew of "DS9," the actor won considerable critical acclaim in the title role of the one-man play "Paul Robeson" and he has reprised the part a number of times, most recently in 2011. He is married with three children.

Captain Benjamin Sisko (Avery Brooks, right) and Quark (Armin Shimerman, left) joined forces to fight Sisko's archenemy, Cardassian Gul Dukat (Marc Alaimo, far left).

> "DS9" quickly established itself as another ratings hit.

U.S.S. DEFIANT
NX-74205
NX-74205

Lieutenant Commander Worf (Michael Dorn, left) was part of the crew of the USS Defiant, a prototype starship stationed at Deep Space Nine.

1995-2001

STAR TREK: VOYAGER

A woman leads the way for the first time in the franchise.

THE USS VOYAGER is lost in space and it is up to Starship Captain Kathryn Janeway — the first and so far only woman to head a “Star Trek” franchise — to lead her crew on the long journey home.

Stranded in the outer reaches of the Milky Way galaxy while searching for a renegade Maquis ship in the 2370s, the USS Voyager must merge crews with the rebels in order to stand any chance of survival.

Over the course of seven seasons, the Voyager truly goes where no human has gone before. Along the way, the mashed-together crew passes through regions belonging to all manner of hostile aliens, from the ruthless Kazon, to the diseased Vidiians and the barbaric Borg.

On board, Janeway (Kate Mulgrew) and First Officer Chakotay (Robert Beltran), a former Starfleet officer who joined the Maquis to defend his home colony, have their work cut out to blend the crew that consists of a Vulcan Second Officer, a Klingon-Human hybrid and a former Borg drone.

Guest stars in the series included Jason Alexander, Ed Begley Jr., Andy Dick, Joel Grey, Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson and Prince Abdullah of Jordan, who played a science officer in the episode “Investigations.”

There were plenty of ups and downs in the plot, such as the discovery of traitors early in the series, a marriage, babies born on the ship and loyal crew members lost late in the journey.

“Voyager” was the first “Star Trek” TV series to exclusively use computer-generated imagery for exterior space shots and do away with the show’s

Captain Kathryn Janeway (Kate Mulgrew, front) led a blended crew through the galaxy on a mission to survive.

> The Voyager is stranded in the outer reach of the Milky Way. <

The USS Voyager passed through territory belonging to different hostile aliens, including the Kazon, Vidiians and Borg.

signature models. The starship, with a staff complement of 150, was smaller than either Kirk's or Picard's starships.

During the series, the crew finds various ways to shorten their journey, using high-tech boosts, time travel and other shortcuts. By the series finale, "Endgame," the total duration of the quest is dramatically reduced from 75 years to just seven.

Although it received mixed reviews from the critics, "Voyager" was the UPN's second longest-running series after helping to launch the fledgling network.

KATE MULGREW

KATE MULGREW WAS on the verge of selling her house and downsizing following a divorce when she heard she had won the iconic role of Captain Kathryn Janeway in "Star Trek: Voyager."

The actress had been passed over after auditioning for the part, which initially went to Genevieve Bujold, the Oscar-nominated star of "Anne of the Thousand Days."

But Bujold quit over the grueling TV schedule after just two days — and Mulgrew became "Star Trek's" first female captain as a series regular in a leading role. She went on to star as Captain Janeway for the entirety of the show's seven-season run.

Mulgrew, 70, first came to attention in the mid-'70s in the daytime soap "Ryan's Hope" and she is best-known today as Galina "Red" Reznikov on "Orange Is the New Black."

She admits her "Star Trek" trailblazing threatened to eclipse the other highlights in her decades-long career, but adds: "I knew that going in, and I think that all of the perks attached to this journey have been really inexpressively great. So the negatives are small."

> "Voyager" was the first "Star Trek" TV series to exclusively use computer-generated imagery for exterior space shots. <

Jeri Ryan (right) played Seven of Nine, a human assimilated by the Borg as a child, but liberated by the Voyager crew. At left, Jason Alexander (right) also made a guest appearance on the show.

2001-2005

STAR TREK: ENTERPRISE

Struggling to engage viewers,
it was time for a prequel.

"STAR TREK" ALWAYS tried to take viewers on a journey where no one had been before — but by 2001, there wasn't really anywhere else to go.

Cramming 21 seasons into 14 years with overlapping runs of "The Next Generation," "Deep Space Nine" and "Voyager," the franchise was struggling for new ways to take the story forward.

It was time for the prequel.

"Enterprise" takes us back to the beginning of the Federation, more than 100 years before Captain Kirk and Dr. Spock were careering around outer space.

The producers weren't just planning to take TV viewers back to an earlier, simpler time with considerably less technobabble; they stripped down the approach so much, they left the words "Star Trek" off the title for the first two seasons and cast off the famous theme song in the opening credits.

There weren't even any phasers or deflector shields as there were in the other four "Star Trek" shows.

The show was set in 2151 — in "Star Trek's" past but still far in the future for the audience. The problem for designers was that technology had advanced considerably since the 1960s, when the original show was filmed and there was a danger that the new Enterprise NX-01 would look more futuristic than

The Enterprise's mission was to press further and faster than any craft had gone before.

NX-01
ENTERPRISE

Designers feared the new Enterprise NX-01 would look more futuristic than Captain Kirk's NCC-1701 starship.

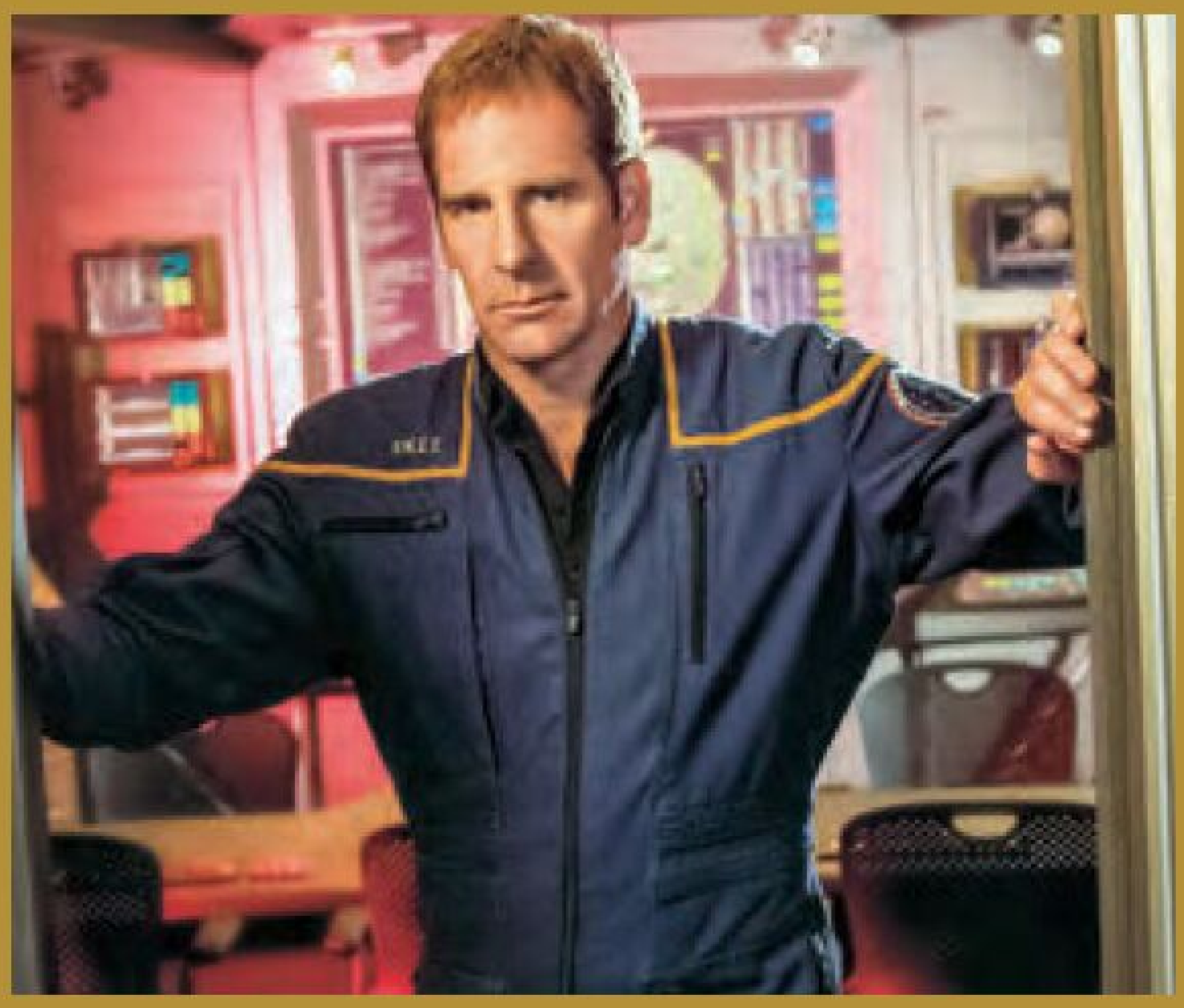
Captain Kirk's NCC-1701 starship.

Confused? Well you're not alone. Critics blasted the series for its lack of identity and bland characters.

Captain Jonathan Archer, played by the low-key "Quantum Leap" actor Scott Bakula, left many unconvinced as he pioneered deep space travel with wide-eyed bafflement. Breaking of the Warp 5 barrier had made interstellar space travel possible and the Enterprise's mission was to press further and faster than any craft had gone before.

"Enterprise" is widely believed to be the least popular of the "Star Trek" series and ended its run in May 2005.

SCOTT BAKULA



SCOTT BAKULA IS best known for his Golden Globe-winning five-year stint as the time-traveling star of the TV series "Quantum Leap."

But his low-key charm made him an unlikely choice as Jonathan Archer, the Beagle-owning captain of the Earth's first deep space exploratory starship Enterprise. The part didn't harm his long film career that has ranged from movies like "American Beauty" and "Life as a House" to the TV drama "Desperate Housewives" and a starring role as Special Agent Dwayne Cassius Pride on "NCIS: New Orleans."

In an interview with StarTrek.com in 2010, Bakula, 71, said of his time on "Enterprise": "It was a fantastic experience. I had a ball. We had some fantastically talented people on all sides of the camera."

In 2006, Bakula reprised the role of Archer for the "Star Trek: Legacy" PC and Xbox 360 video games as a voice-over. He's married with four children.

Captain Jonathan Archer (Scott Bakula, right) led the crew of Enterprise NX-01.

> Critics blasted the series for its lack of identity and bland characters. <

Set in 2151 — still far into the future for audiences — "Enterprise" was the prequel to the original "Star Trek," with references to Klingons, Vulcans and Romulans.

Characters like Michael Burnham and Saru helped welcome in a new era of Trek.

2017-2024

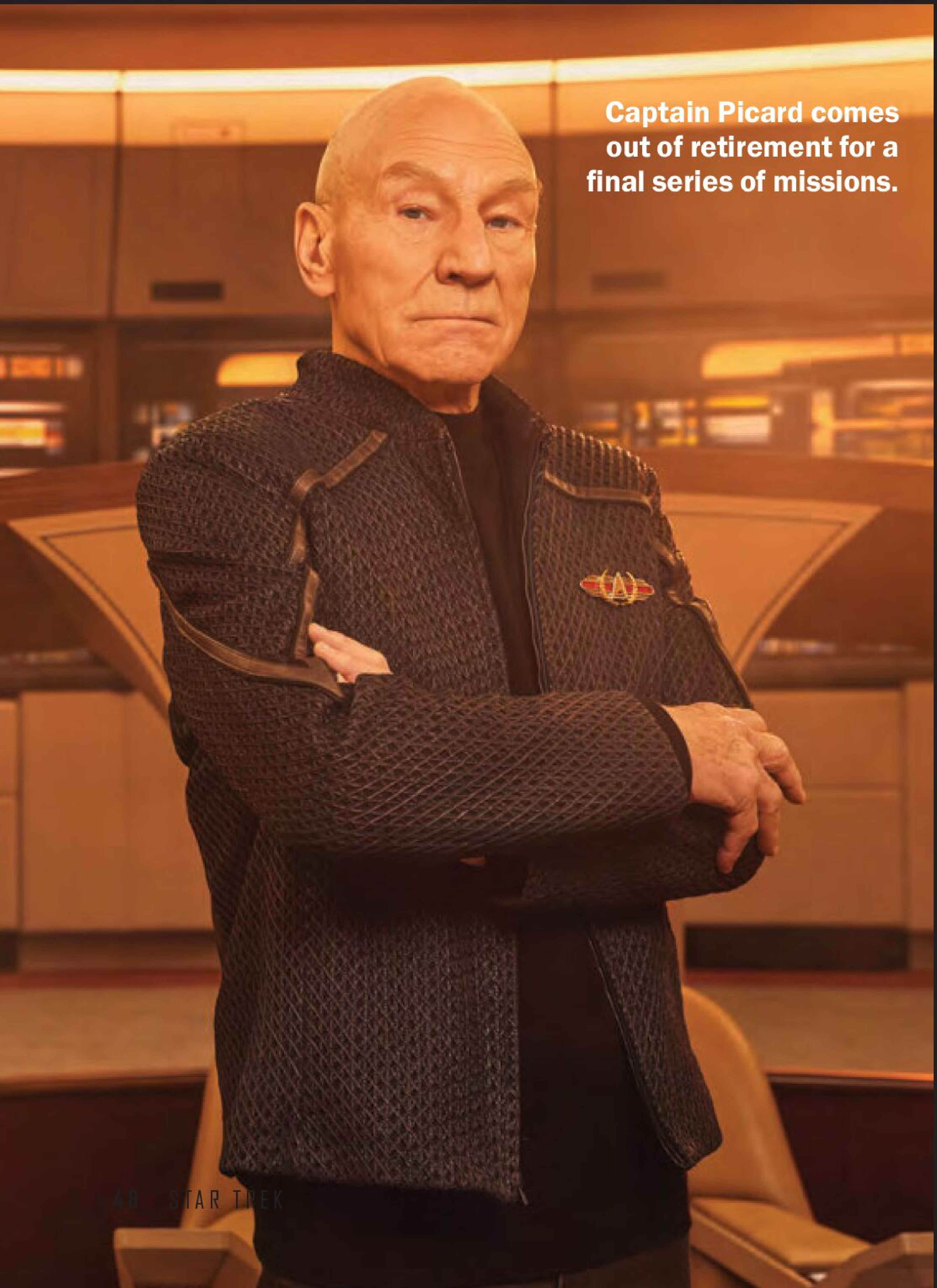
STAR TREK: DISCOVERY

CBS marked the 50th anniversary of "Star Trek" by announcing a new series.

THE FIRST "TREK" SERIES to air in over a decade, "Discovery" took a big step into the future — eventually, quite literally. The show followed an intrepid crew led by the headstrong Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green), the adopted sister of Spock and a revered first officer-turned-social pariah-turned-formidable captain. Executive producer Alex Kurtzman and company followed the seasonal serialization model of "Deep Space Nine," making every week's episode a can't-miss.

The premiere season hit the ground running, with twists and turns involving Klingon sleep agents and Mirror Universe doppelgängers. Season 2 brought the show fully into the canon, as the Discovery crew merged with Captain Pike's Enterprise in a literal search for Spock. The show took a complete turn, however, when the titular vessel launched itself into the year 3188 — by far the latest point of any series in the "Trek" timeline.

Our heroes emerged in a completely different universe from anything they — and we — had ever known. Starfleet was in shambles after a cataclysmic event called "the Burn" wiped out warp capacity for the vast majority of ships. And so "Discovery" spent the latter three seasons of its run rebuilding the galaxy, encountering new characters and bringing the unifying themes of the past into the distant future.



Captain Picard comes out of retirement for a final series of missions.

2020-2023

STAR TREK: PICARD

Three seasons culminate in a satisfying nostalgia bomb reunion.

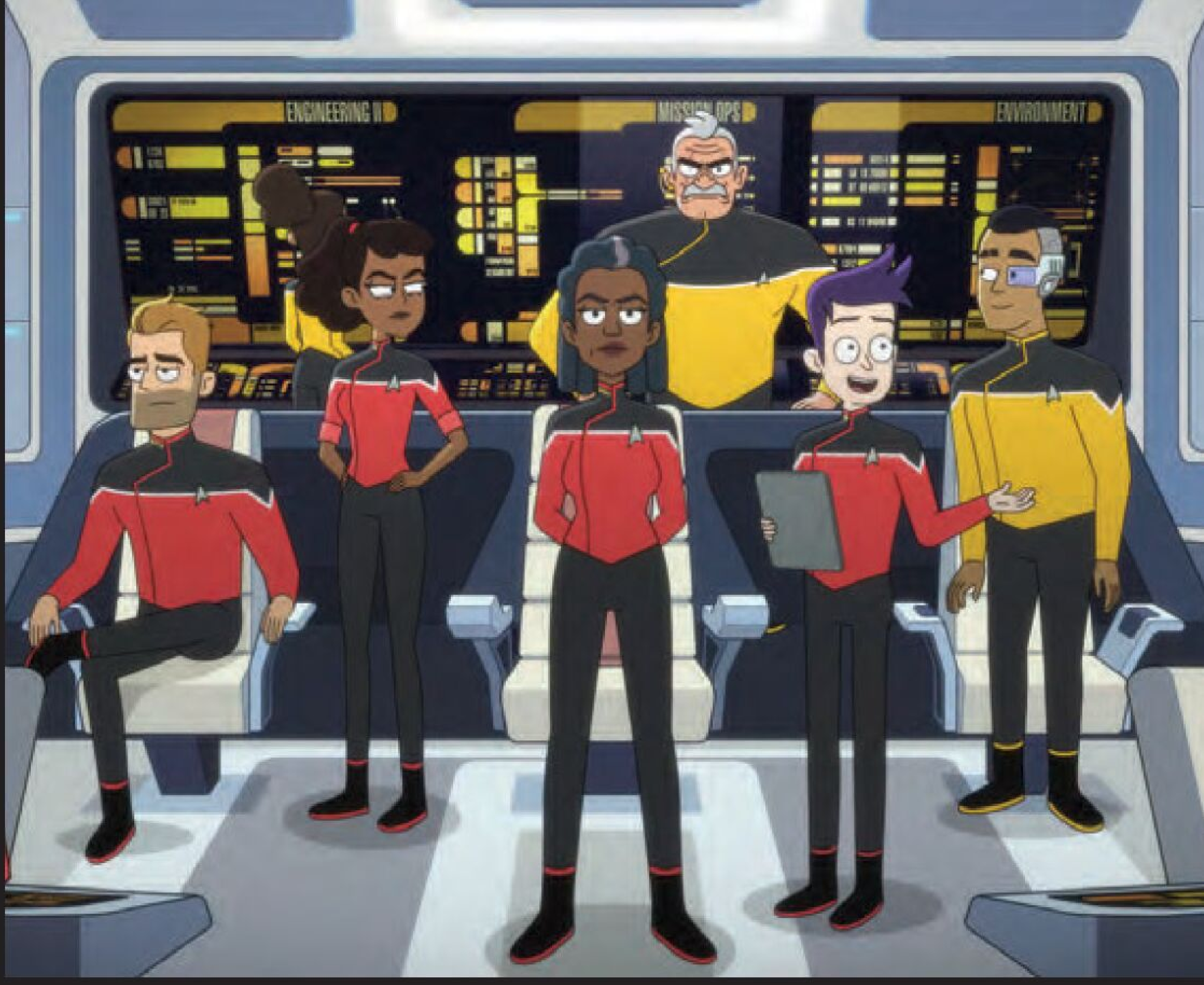
GIVEN THE IMMENSE POPULARITY of "The Next Generation," Trekkies were clamoring for a check-in on the crew of the Enterprise-D. And they got their wish almost 20 years later with "Picard." As assumed, the series focused on the titular formal captain (and admiral), now living out his days in peace on his vineyard. But it isn't long before he's called into action away from stomping grapes and back to exploring the stars.

Much like "Discovery," "Picard" took on three very different stories during its run. Its first season had Picard assembling a new crew to take down a covert Romulan operation aiming to wipe out all forms of synthetic life. Season 2 did its own take on "The Voyage Home," traveling all the way back to 2024 to prevent the origin of a xenophobic confederation. It took until the third and final season for fans to get what they anticipated when "Picard" was first announced: A full "TNG" reunion, complete with a stint for "Voyager" fan-favorite Seven of Nine (Jeri Ryan) for good measure.

2020-2024

STAR TREK: LOWER DECKS

Star Trek returns to animation —
in a completely new direction.

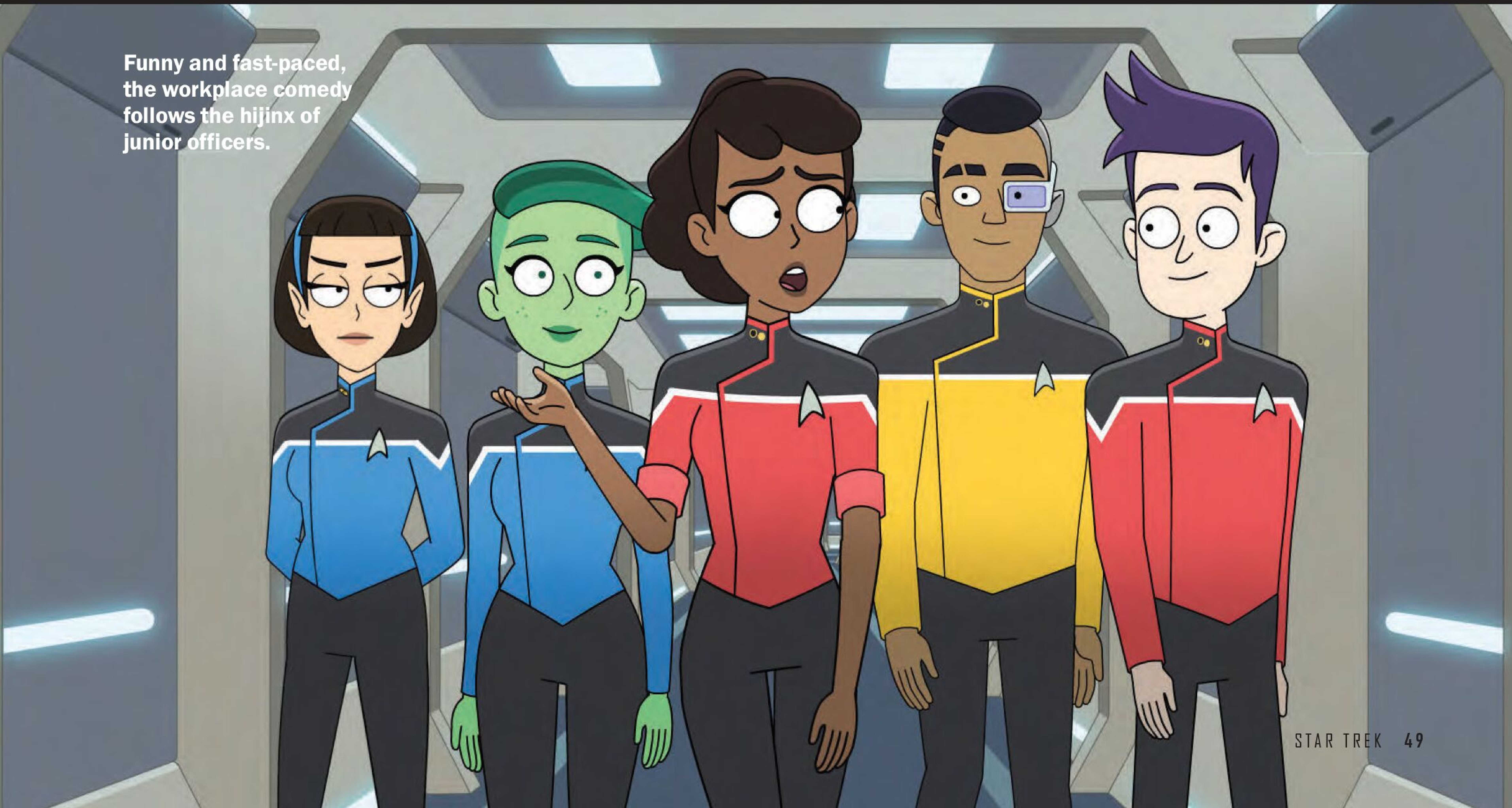


WITH ADVENTURES SPANNING over half a decade and hundreds of episodes, there are, of course, many callbacks to previous series and movies littered across Trek history. But one show by far had the most concentrated ratio of references: “Lower Decks.” The title itself is even a shout-out to a popular “TNG” episode, similarly focusing on the rank-and-file ensigns on the U.S.S. Cerritos in the 24th century.

In true fashion for a show around the lowest rungs on the Starfleet ladder, “Lower Decks” breaks great form from many shows in its vicinity. It’s branded as the first “Star Trek” comedy, from the mind of former “Rick and Morty” writer Mike McMahon. Similar to the hit Adult Swim series, it’s the first cartoon show in the franchise since “The Animated Series.” And McMahon and company make great use of the medium, creating a wide array of imaginative, expansive visuals, often used to put the Cerritos crew in peril and/or great pain.

Despite the joke-a-minute pace of “Lower Decks,” the show manages to thread the needle, sending up the franchise with love. Every episode is jam-packed with references, from blink-and-you’ll-miss-it name-drops to plotlines centered around revered characters like Riker (Jonathan Frakes), Sulu (George Takei) and Data (Brent Spiner). With a main cast sporting the voices of Jack Quaid, Tawny Newsome and Jerry O’Connell, the success of “Lower Decks” showcased how expansive genres of storytelling can be under the “Trek” banner.

> > Every episode is jam-packed with references, from name-drops to plotlines centered around revered characters. <



Funny and fast-paced, the workplace comedy follows the hijinx of junior officers.

2021-2024

STAR TREK: PRODIGY

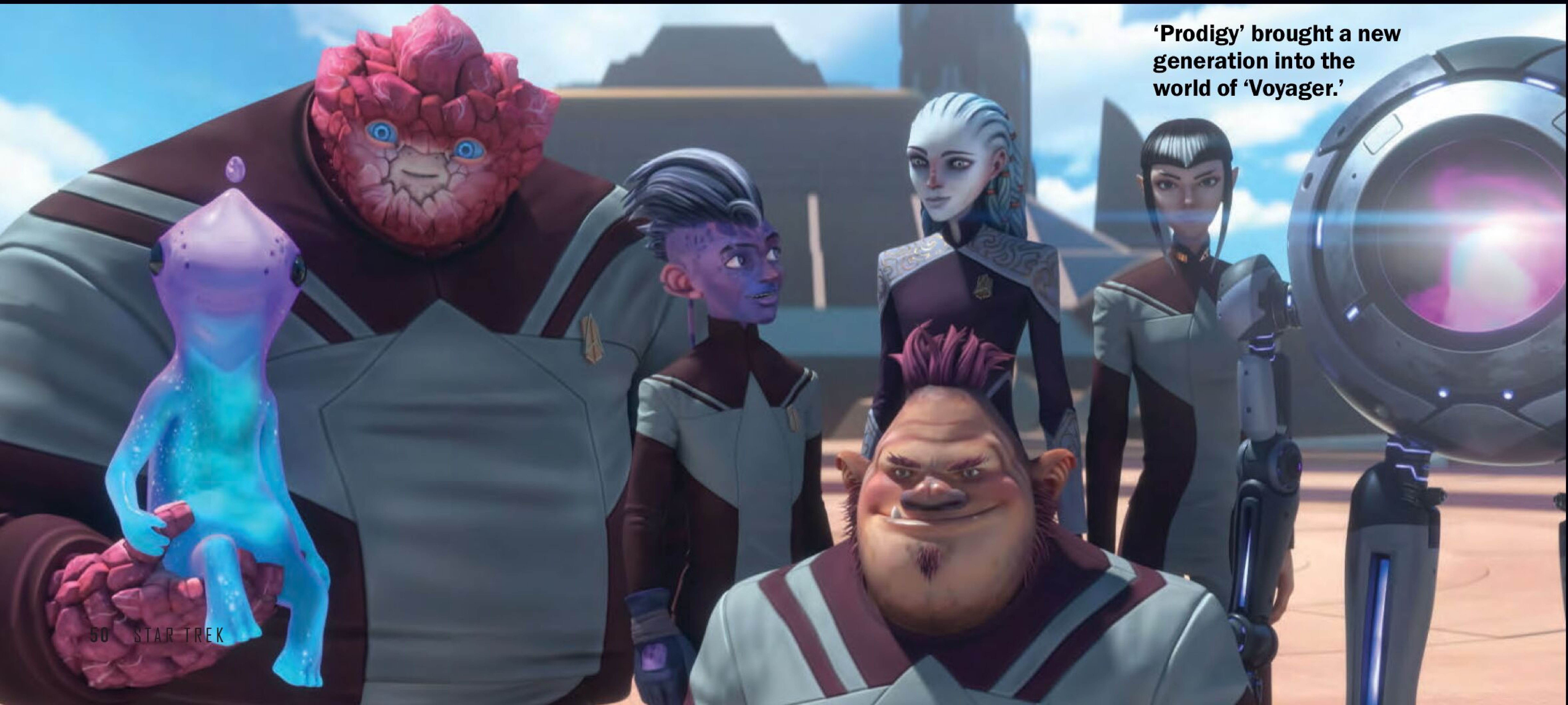
Two seasons, two networks...but not enough viewers.

DESPITE BEING KNOWN for its mature themes and occasional head-tilting scientific jargon, you're never too young to become a Trekkie. And Kurtzman and company put that idea to the test with "Prodigy," the first-ever "Trek" series aimed specifically at a younger audience. The show focused on a group of teenage aliens who, after discovering an abandoned starship, learn about — and eventually become members of — Starfleet.

There's a lot that 'Prodigy' adds to the canon, including a couple of new intergalactic species. But a familiar face helps anchor the new recruits, as Kate Mulgrew lends her voice once more to play Captain Janeway. As the series goes on, even more of her "Voyager" compatriots get brought into the fold, as the Protostar crew is outfitted to find and rescue a missing Chakotay (Robert Beltran).

"Prodigy" originally premiered on Nickelodeon and Paramount+, and the showrunners were already at work on a second season. But Paramount elected to belay that order, cancelling the series and removing it from streaming. Luckily, Netflix swooped in months later with their own tractor beam. The streamer not only served as the new home for Season 1, but it also allowed Season 2 to resume production and air. Unfortunately, Netflix then canceled the show and removed it from its library, leaving "Prodigy" as lost as Voyager in the Alpha Quadrant.

> The show focused on a group of teenage aliens who become members of Starfleet. <



'Prodigy' brought a new generation into the world of 'Voyager.'

Kirk, Spock, and Uhura get a fresh take for a new era.

2022-PRESENT

STAR TREK: STRANGE NEW WORLDS

From mysteries to musicals, Pike's crew does it all.

TREKKIES ARE KNOWN FOR their hesitancy toward any content around the timeline of the "Original Series." But when Anson Mount and Ethan Peck arrived as Captain Pike and Spock, respectively, in "Star Trek: Discovery," it earned massive acclaim from fans. And so, while the Discovery moved on from the 2200s, Kurtzman did not, creating the spinoff series "Strange New Worlds."

This show is the "new Trek" series that hearkens back to the storytelling styles of yore, opting for weekly, relatively self-contained episodes. But within those boundaries, the series paints in bright, vivid colors, putting forward a wide variety of genres. Over three seasons of "Strange New Worlds" so far, we've seen everything from a body-switching Vulcan comedy to a murder mystery to, perhaps most audaciously, a full musical. We even saw a huge "Trek" crossover, with Tawny Newsom and Jack Quaid appearing as their "Lower Decks" live-action counterparts.

Despite taking place before "TOS," "Strange New Worlds" has also been able to slowly bleed in some origin stories of the beloved Enterprise crew. That includes Spock, Uhura (Celia Rose Gooding), Scotty (Martin Quinn) and even a new take on James T. Kirk (Paul Wesley). We still have two more go-arounds before "Strange New Worlds" completes its five-season mission. But, considering what we've seen to date, the path ahead for Captain Pike, the crew and us is anything but predictable.

TREKKIES OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Devotees attempt to break the Guinness world record for most assembled "Star Trek" fans at the convention in Las Vegas in 2012.

Since the first convention was held in New York City in 1972, the fervor of "Star Trek's" loyal fans has been practically unrivaled in the world of entertainment.

THEY COME FROM all walks of life and from all parts of the world, dressed in "Star Trek" regalia and eager to mix and mingle with the stars and production staff of the "Star Trek" TV shows and films, as well as other like-minded folks.

They are the Trekkies (or Trekkers, depending on who you ask), and each year, millions of them spend a small fortune traveling to one (or more!) of the hundreds of "Star Trek" conventions held annually around the globe.

The fervor of "Star Trek's" loyal fans is practically unrivaled in the world of entertainment. And it's solely due to the Trekkies' devotion that the franchise has continued to remain

Special appearances by stars such as Patrick Stewart (left) and William Shatner are always a treat for fans.

2015
A
S
convention
CREATION

relevant — and deeply loved by millions — 50 years after the series first aired on television.

The first official convention was held at the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York City from January 21 to 23 in 1972. Legend has it they only expected 500 attendees — but as many as 3,000 showed up to celebrate their love for Trekdom.

William Shatner attended his first convention in 1975, unable to refuse the sizeable appearance fee. Leonard Nimoy followed suit. The friendship between the pair blossomed over the years, largely because they made so many appearances together at conventions. Spock and the Captain attended an estimated 100 conventions together. It was "the glue that cemented our friendship," Shatner has said.

They told stories together on stage, with Nimoy often making jokes at Shatner's expense.

But it wasn't always fun and games. Shatner stopped attending for more than a decade in the 1970s and '80s because he wasn't always comfortable with his fans' adulation.

In 1986, he famously poked fun at Trekkies in a "Saturday Night Live" skit, in which he told a group of ardent fans to "get a life." He also quipped: "You've turned an enjoyable little job that I did as a lark for a few years into a colossal waste of time! I mean, how old are you people?"

Despite his decade-long hiatus, Shatner has been attending conventions ever since; Nimoy continued to attend until 2011.

The conventions are a veritable smorgasbord of all things "Star Trek." Typical activities include film and TV episode screenings, costume parades, Q&A sessions with guest panelists and auctions of "Star Trek" memorabilia, among other events.

This year's official convention, which will celebrate "Star Trek's" 60th anniversary, will once again take place at Las Vegas' Rio Suites Hotel from August 5 through August 9. The five-day event will feature more than 150 "Star Trek" celebrities — including Shatner, Walter Koenig, Clint Howard, George Takei, Anthony Rapp, Brent Spiner, Nancy Kovack, Michael Berryman, Jonathan Frakes and many more — costume exhibits, prop displays, autograph and photo op packages and convention-only freebies.

Tickets, which range in price from $349 for 5-day general admission to the $1599 Gold Weekend package, were mostly sold out by January of this year. Although the event's organizers, Creation Entertainment, are tight-lipped about how many Trekkies they expect to attend, they point out that theirs is the largest "Star Trek" convention in the world.

> Each year, millions of fans spend a small fortune traveling to one (or more!) of the hundreds of "Star Trek" conventions around the globe. <

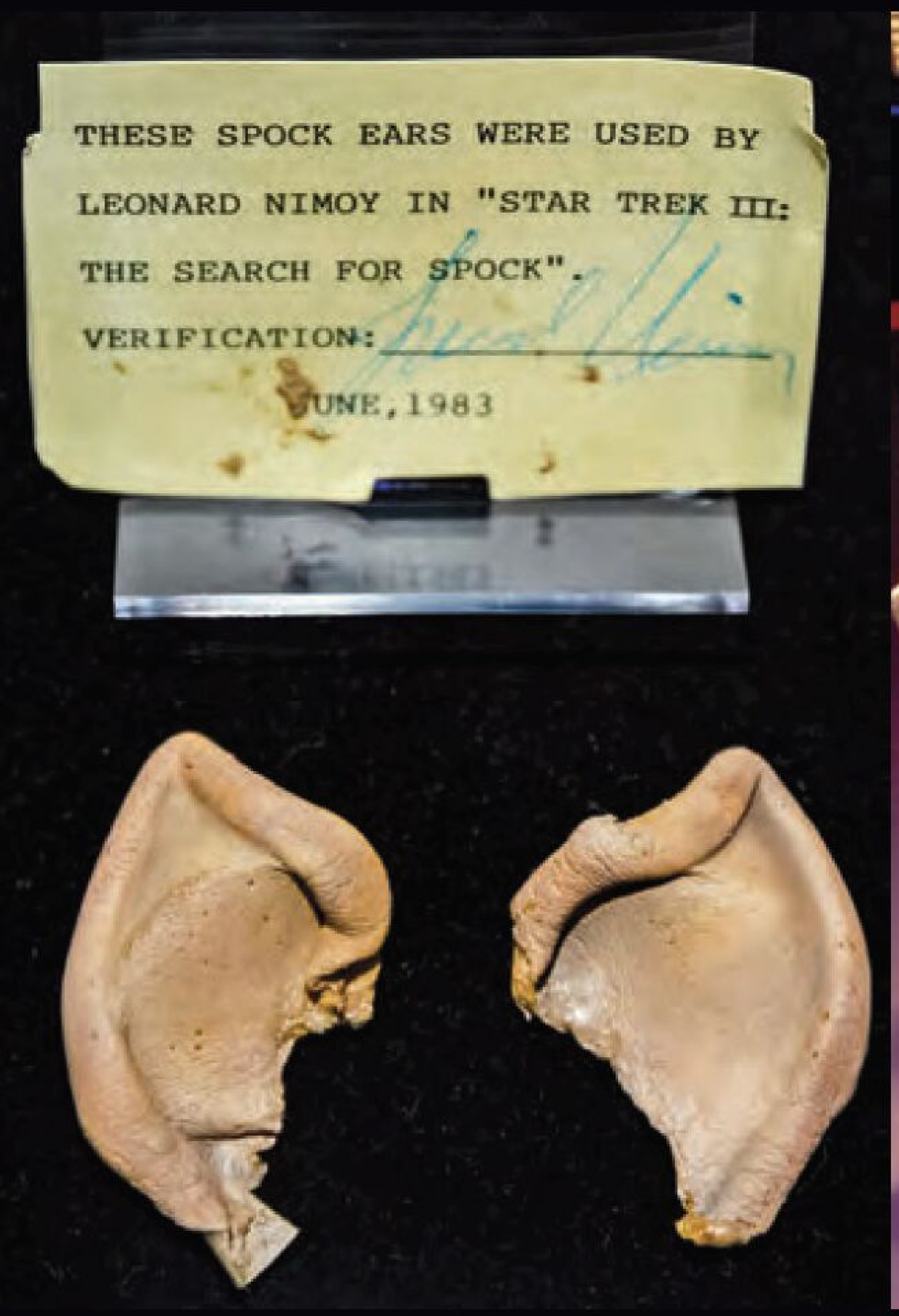
Trekkies of all ages attend annual conventions dressed in "Star Trek" costumes, where they participate in film and TV episode screenings, Q&A sessions with guest panelists, memorabilia auctions and more.

Spock's blue tunic from the original "Star Trek" series.

An emblem from the uniform worn by the crew.

Trekobilia

Memorabilia from the "Star Trek" TV shows and films have been sold for small fortunes at the most prestigious auction houses and displayed at conventions throughout the country.



THESE SPOCK EARS WERE USED BY
LEONARD NIMOY IN "STAR TREK III:
THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK".
VERIFICATION: Leonard Nimoy
JUNE, 1983

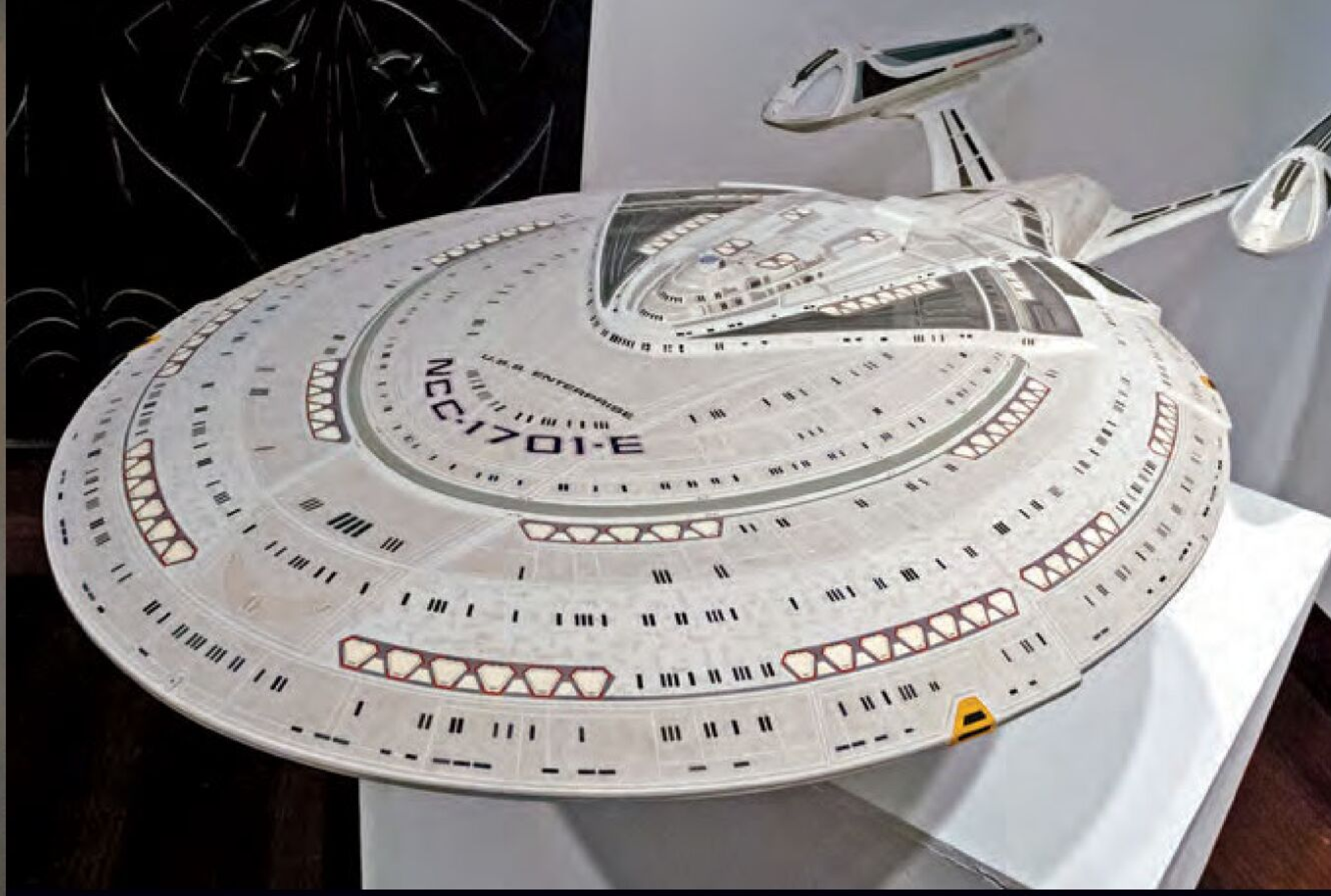
Above left: The artificial ears worn by Leonard Nimoy in the movie "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock."
Above right: A replica of Captain James T. Kirk's chair from the original "Star Trek" series.

STARFLEET COMMAND
UNITED EARTH SPACE PROBE AGENCY

Vintage movie and television props, like the one above, also included a tricorder (left) and ops manual (right).

ENTERPRISE
OPS MANUAL
24-009139-NX01

Action figures were created in the likeness of the characters. At left, Captain Kirk.


U.S.S. ENTERPRISE
NCC-1701-E

Above: The Starship Enterprise-E model used in “Star Trek: First Contact.”

STAR TREK VOYAGER
U.S.S. Voyager
MAGIC

Above: “Star Trek” action figures; below: a set of Phaser rifles.

> The blockbuster films ensured that the "Star Trek" movie series would "live long and prosper." <

THE BIG SCREEN

Star Trek Goes To
THE MOVIES

With the success of the TV series, Paramount Pictures expanded the franchise onto the big screen — and fans flocked to theaters.

STAR TREK I-VI

NO ONE EVER could have predicted how wildly popular “Star Trek” would become after it went into syndication.

Looking to capitalize on “Star Trek” mania, Paramount Pictures decided to expand the franchise, and in 1975, began putting the pieces together for a “Star Trek” movie after lobbying by creator Gene Roddenberry.

The first film almost never saw the light of day. In 1977, Paramount dropped the project in favor of a remake of the TV show, which was set to include the original cast.

But the release of two highly successful science-fiction films that year — “Star Wars” and Close Encounters of the Third Kind” — prompted Paramount to change its mind once again, and “Star Trek: The Motion Picture” was released to movie theaters nationwide on December 7, 1979. It featured the full original cast from the TV show.

The cost of making the movie was much higher than the studio had anticipated — more than $45 million — due to the special effects used in the film. “Star Trek: The Motion Picture,” which saw the enterprise crew saving Earth from a mysterious alien cloud, received mixed reviews from critics and performed only satisfactorily at the box office, grossing $139 million worldwide. Still, it was enough for Paramount to commit to a second, but less costly, sequel.

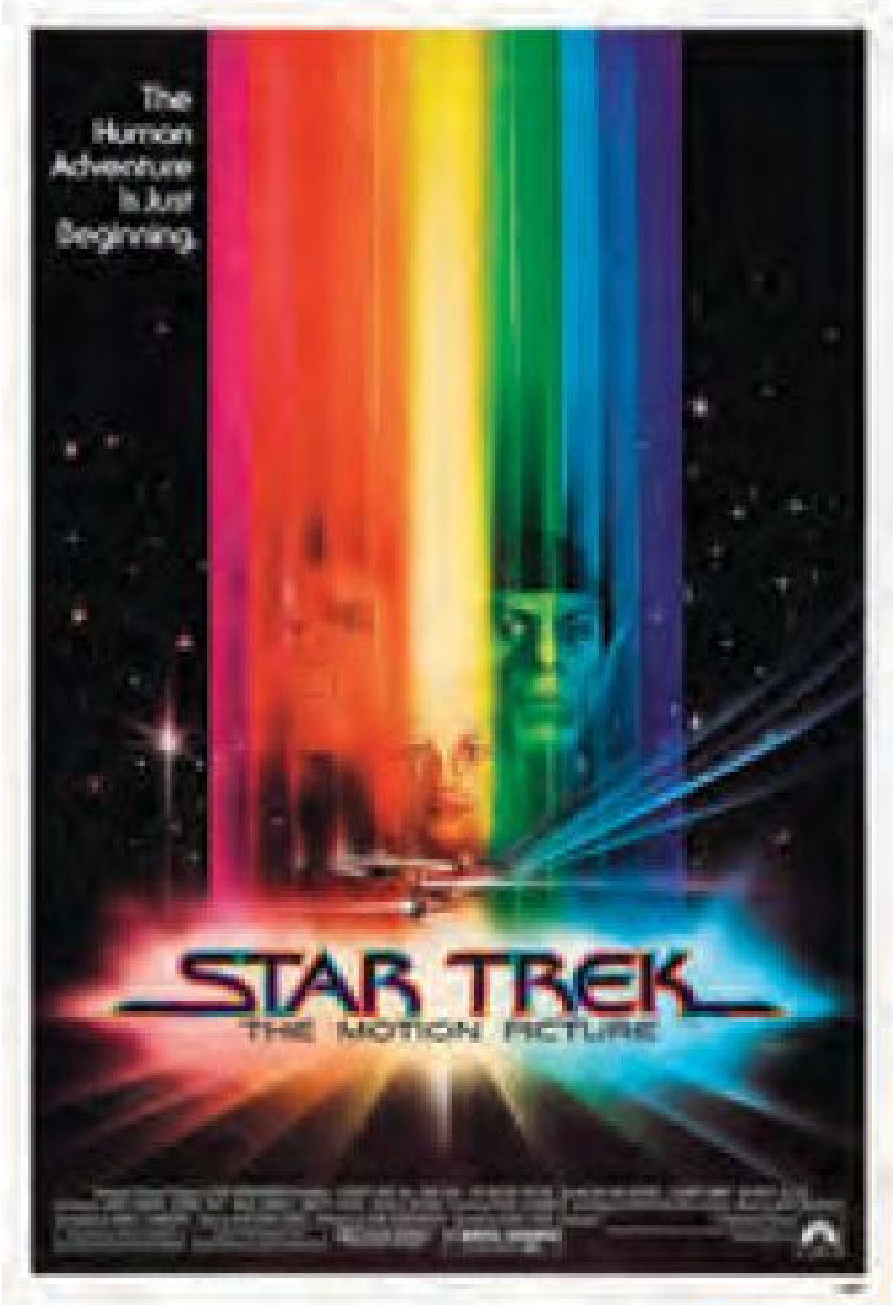
The only stipulation was that Roddenberry would not have creative control of the project.

The second “Star Trek” film, “The Wrath of Khan,” released in 1982, was a huge success and is considered by many to be the best among all of the franchise’s films.

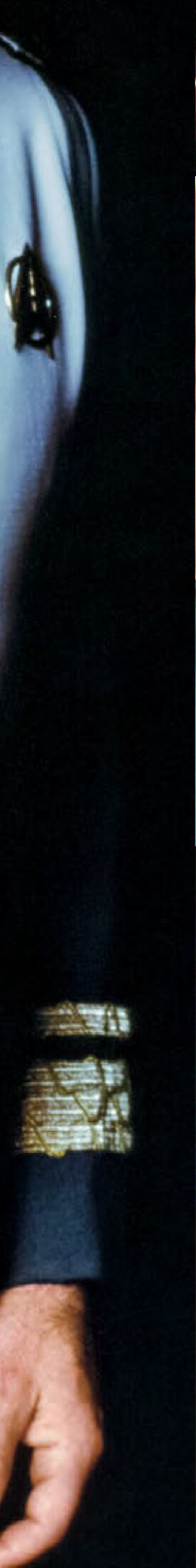
William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and the rest of the cast returned, although Nimoy initially declined to participate in any but the first film. He only agreed to star in “The Wrath of Khan” because he was promised that his character, Spock, would be killed off in dramatic

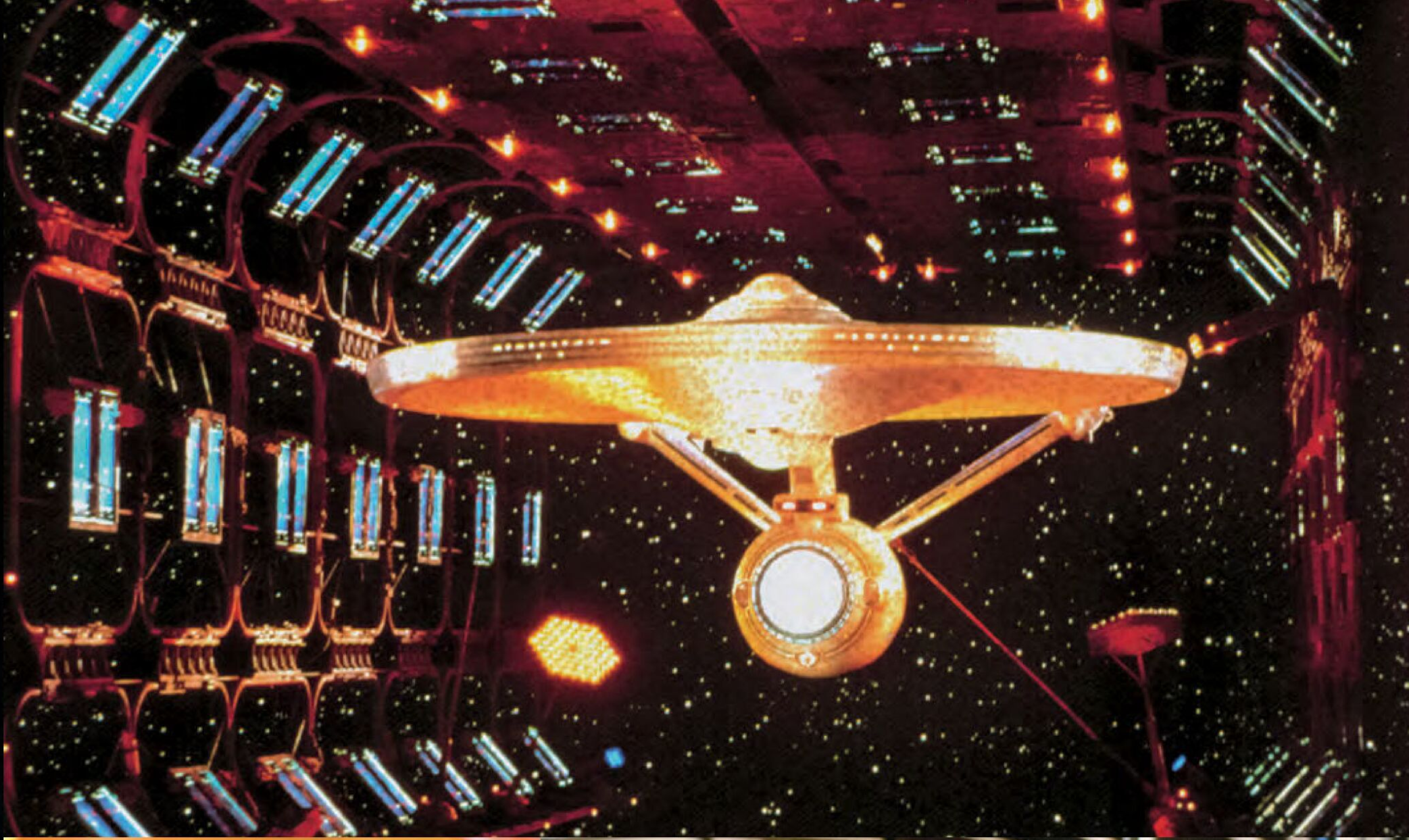
1979

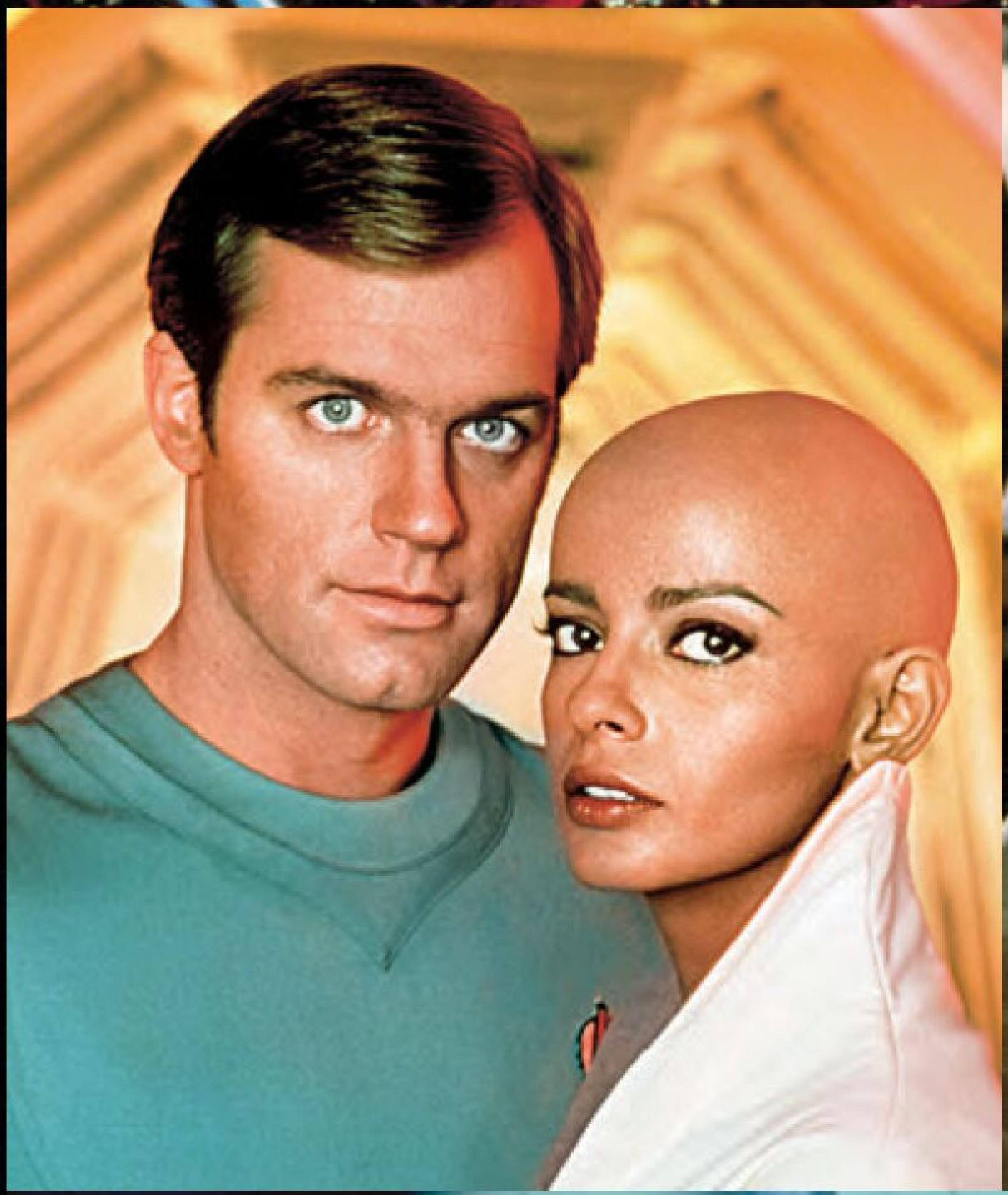
STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE

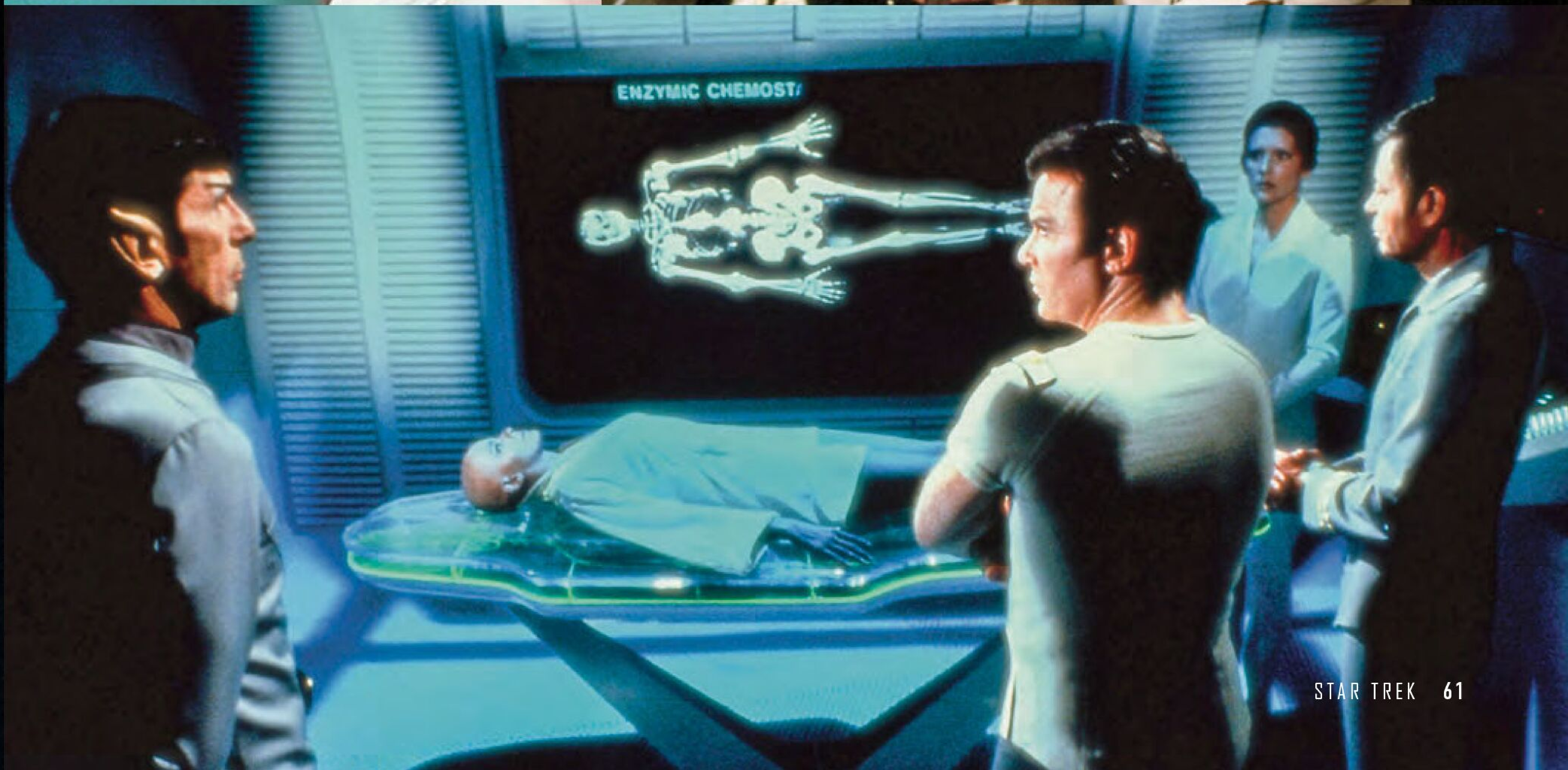


Set in the 23rd century, Captain James T. Kirk (William Shatner) leads the crew of the USS Enterprise, including (center, from left) Commander Willard Decker (Stephen Collins), Ilia (Persis Khambatta), the Deltan navigator of the starship, and chief engineer Montgomery Scott (James Doohan), on a mission to save the planet from a mysterious alien cloud.








ENZYMIC CHEMOST/

fashion. The death scene, however, was watered down due to an outcry from test audiences.

Four more films featuring the original cast were made: “Star Trek III: The Search for Spock” (1984); “Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home” (1986); “Star Trek V: The Final Frontier” (1989); and “Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country” (1991).

Even Nimoy returned as Spock, despite being killed off in the second film. (It’s science fiction, after all!) Nimoy also got behind the camera, acting as director for the third and fourth films.

Not to be outdone, Shatner directed the fifth.

For the sixth and final film featuring “Star Trek’s” original cast, Paramount tapped Nicholas Meyer, who had directed “The Wrath of Khan,” to oversee the project. Meyer and Roddenberry, who co-wrote the film’s story line with Nimoy, Lawrence Konner and Mark Rosenthal, butted heads throughout the production because Roddenberry hated the resulting script.

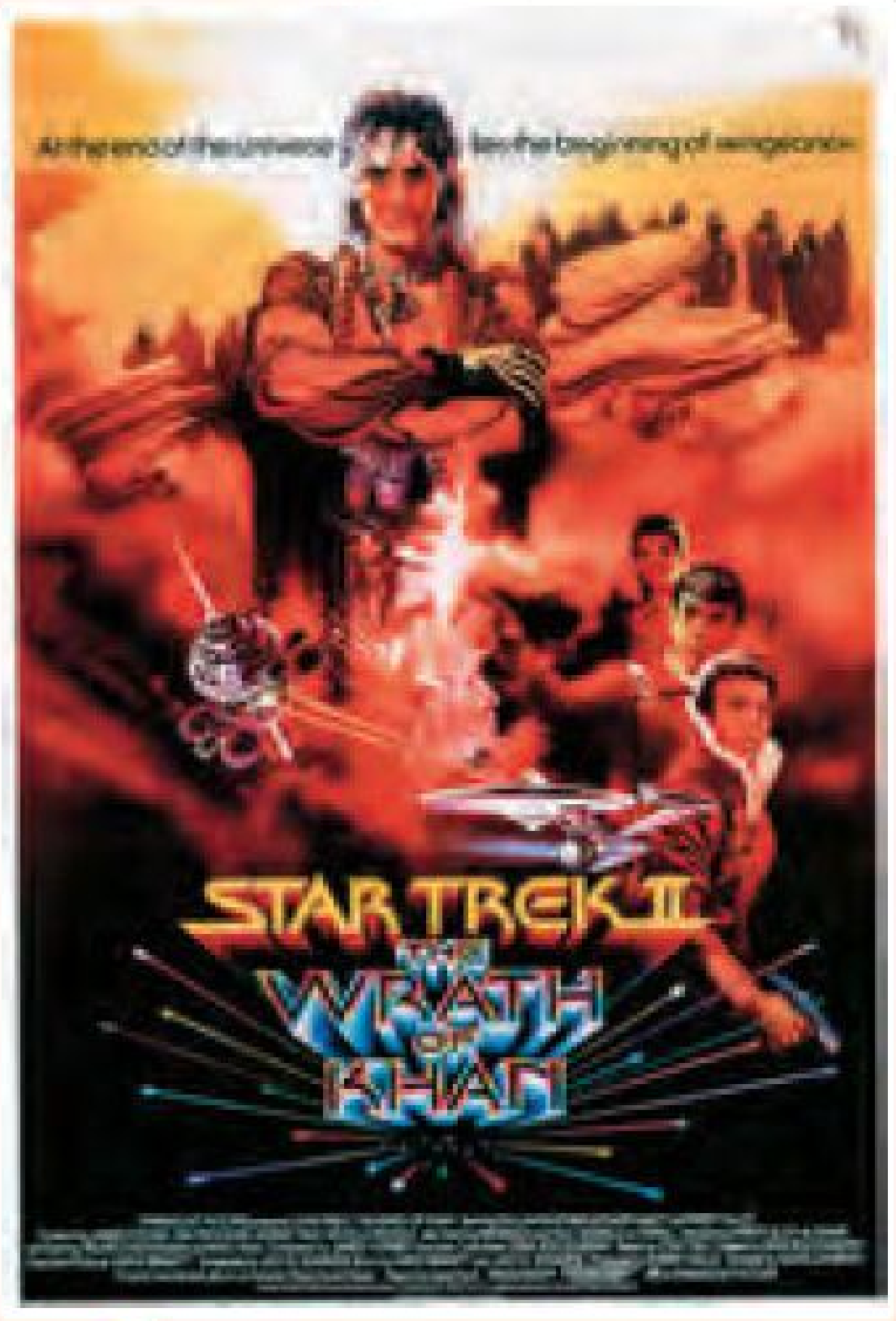
Still, the film was a success both critically and commercially, earning more at the box office on opening weekend than any of the previous movies in the series.

In total, the first six “Star Trek” films earned more than $2 billion worldwide. More than 25 years after the “Star Trek” TV series first aired, fans were still flocking to the theaters to see the crew of the Starship Enterprise.

The success of the films ensured that the “Star Trek” movie series, as Spock says, would “live long and prosper.”

1982

STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN



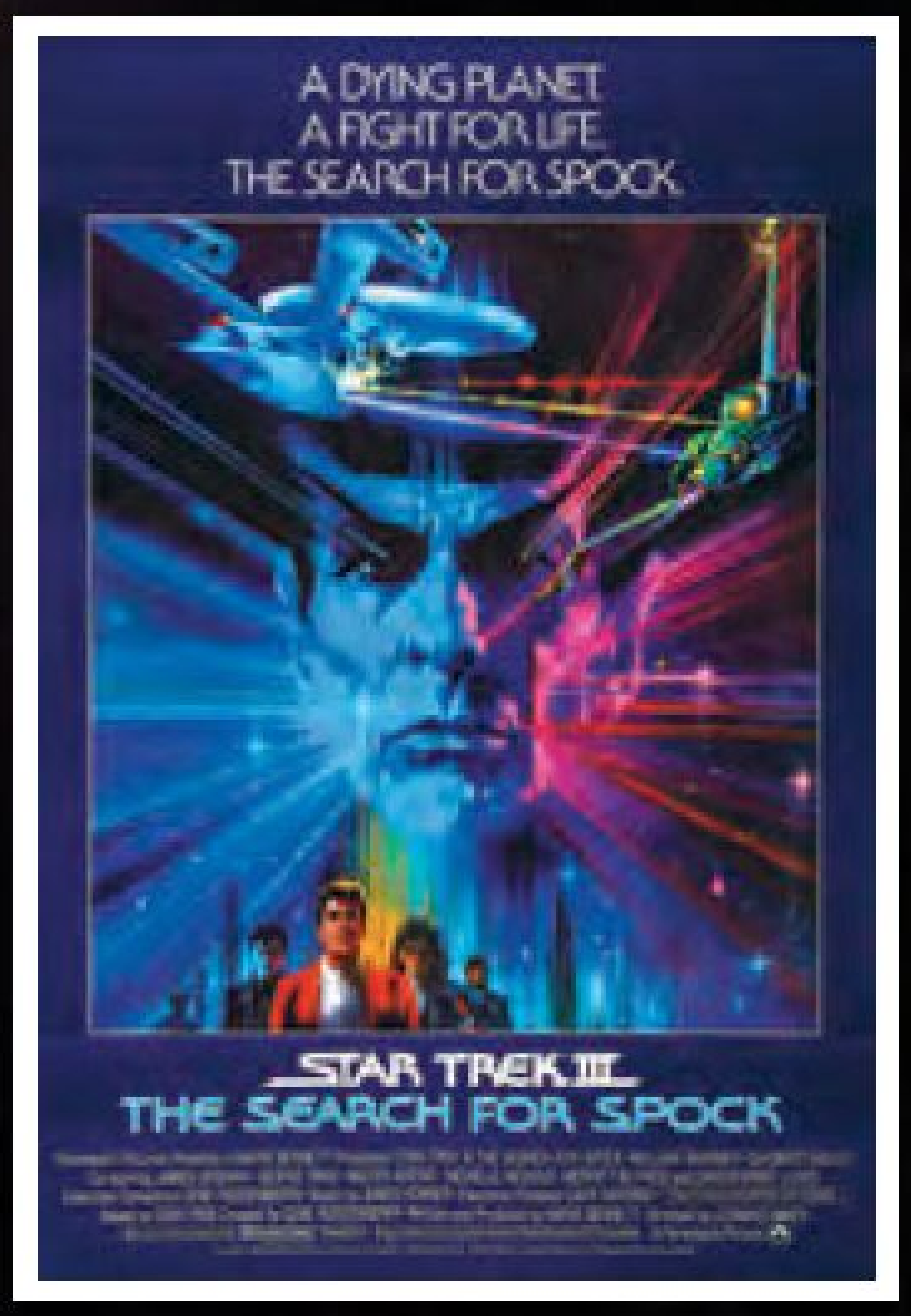
Leonard Nimoy (top left, with Shatner) agreed to return as Spock for the second film, “The Wrath of Khan.” The movie starred Ricardo Montalban (bottom right, flanked by Nancy Rogers and Laura Banks) as Khan.

ENTERPRISE

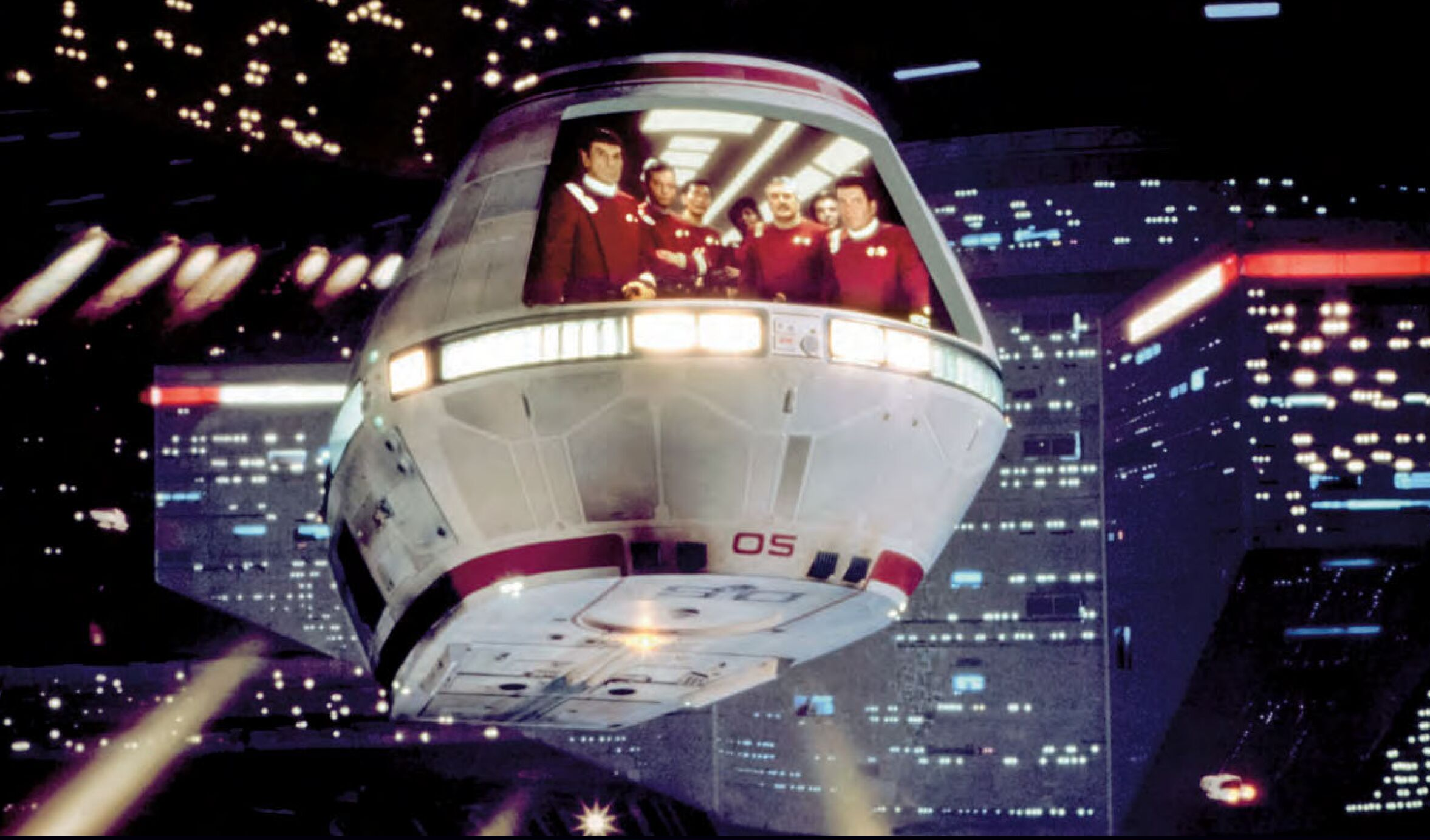
> "The Wrath of Khan" is considered by many to be the best among all of the franchise's films. <

1984

STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK

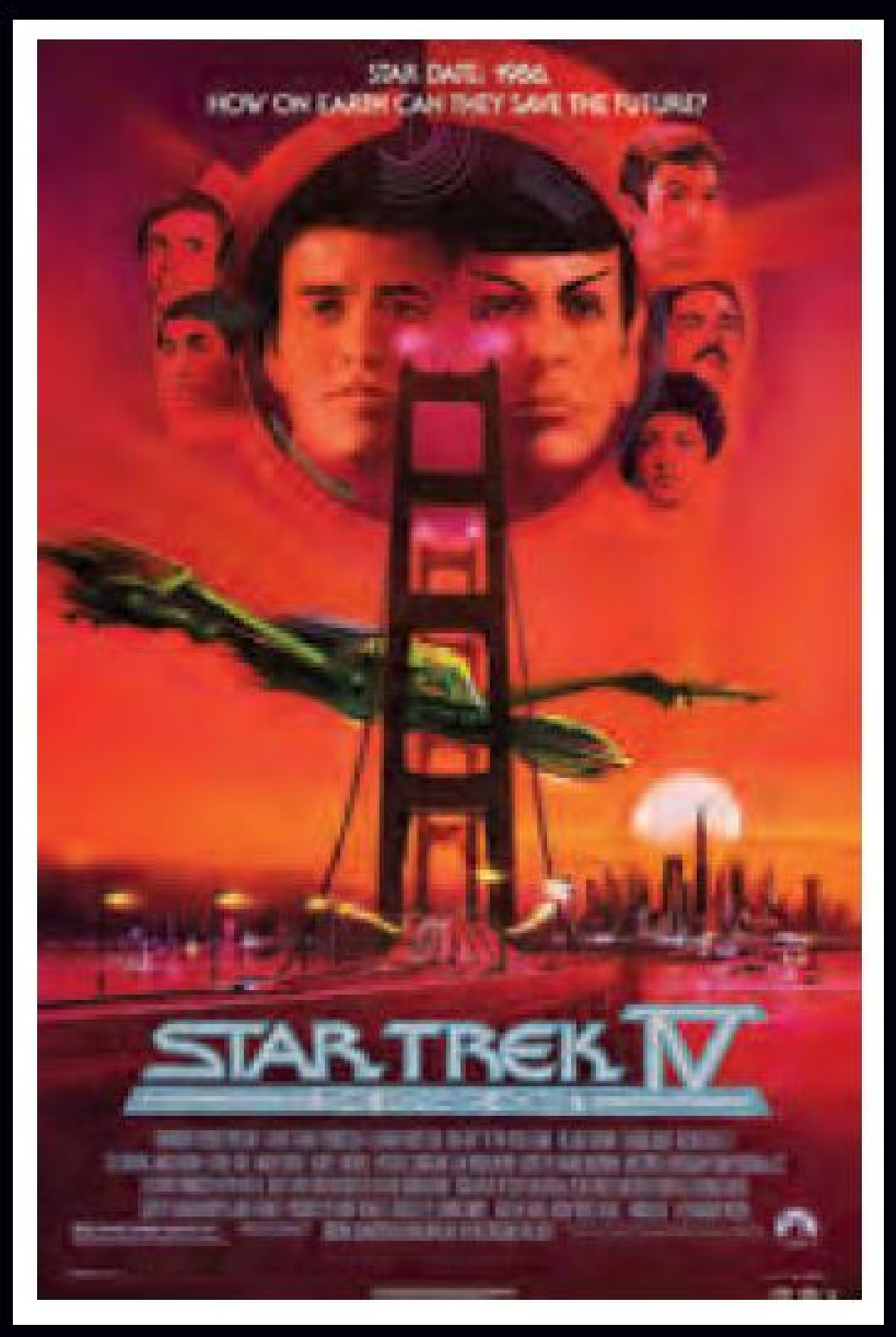

A DYING PLANET.
A FIGHT FOR LIFE.
THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK.
STAR TREK III
THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK

The third film in the series finds the crew of the Enterprise contending with Klingons (below) and returning to Earth after Spock's death. Nimoy also worked behind the camera, directing this film.



1986

STAR TREK IV: THE VOYAGE HOME


STAR DATE: 1986.
HOW ON EARTH CAN THEY SAVE THE FUTURE?
STAR TREK IV

Also a Nimoy-directed film, the crew are back on Earth in the 20th century searching for humpback whales, the only beings that can communicate with a dangerous alien probe. Catherine Hicks (right, with Shatner) plays Dr. Gillian Taylor, a biologist and Kirk's love interest.

1979

STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER

STAR TREK V
THE FINAL FRONTIER

This time, the crew's mission is to rescue human, Klingon and Romulan hostages on the planet Nimbus III. They soon find out that Spock's half-brother Sybok (Laurence Luckinbill, below on right) is behind the hostage situation.

> Not to be outdone by Nimoy, Shatner directed the fifth film of the series. <

1991

STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

General Chang (Christopher Plummer) puts Kirk and McCoy (DeForest Kelley, right) on trial for the assassination of Klingon's High Chancellor. This film earned more at the box office on opening weekend than any of the other "Star Trek" movies in the series.

> "The Undiscovered Country" is the sixth and final film featuring "Star Trek's" original cast. <

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

Audiences were not enthusiastic about all four films.

THE ORIGINAL "STAR TREK" cast — with one major exception — bid farewell to the Enterprise in "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country," making way for "The Next Generation" crew to continue where Kirk, Spock and McCoy left off.

In 1994, Paramount released the seventh Star Trek film, "Star Trek: Generations," the first film in the "Next Generation" series. In this movie, Captain Jean-Luc Picard, played by Patrick Stewart, joins forces with his predecessor, Captain Kirk — who had long been presumed dead — to save a planet that's being threatened by an evil villain.

Although some of the cast members of "The Next Generation" TV series were concerned about falling victim to the "Star Trek" curse — being typecast in the role — the entire main cast, including Jonathan Frakes, Brent Spiner, LeVar Burton and Michael Dorn, appeared in the film.

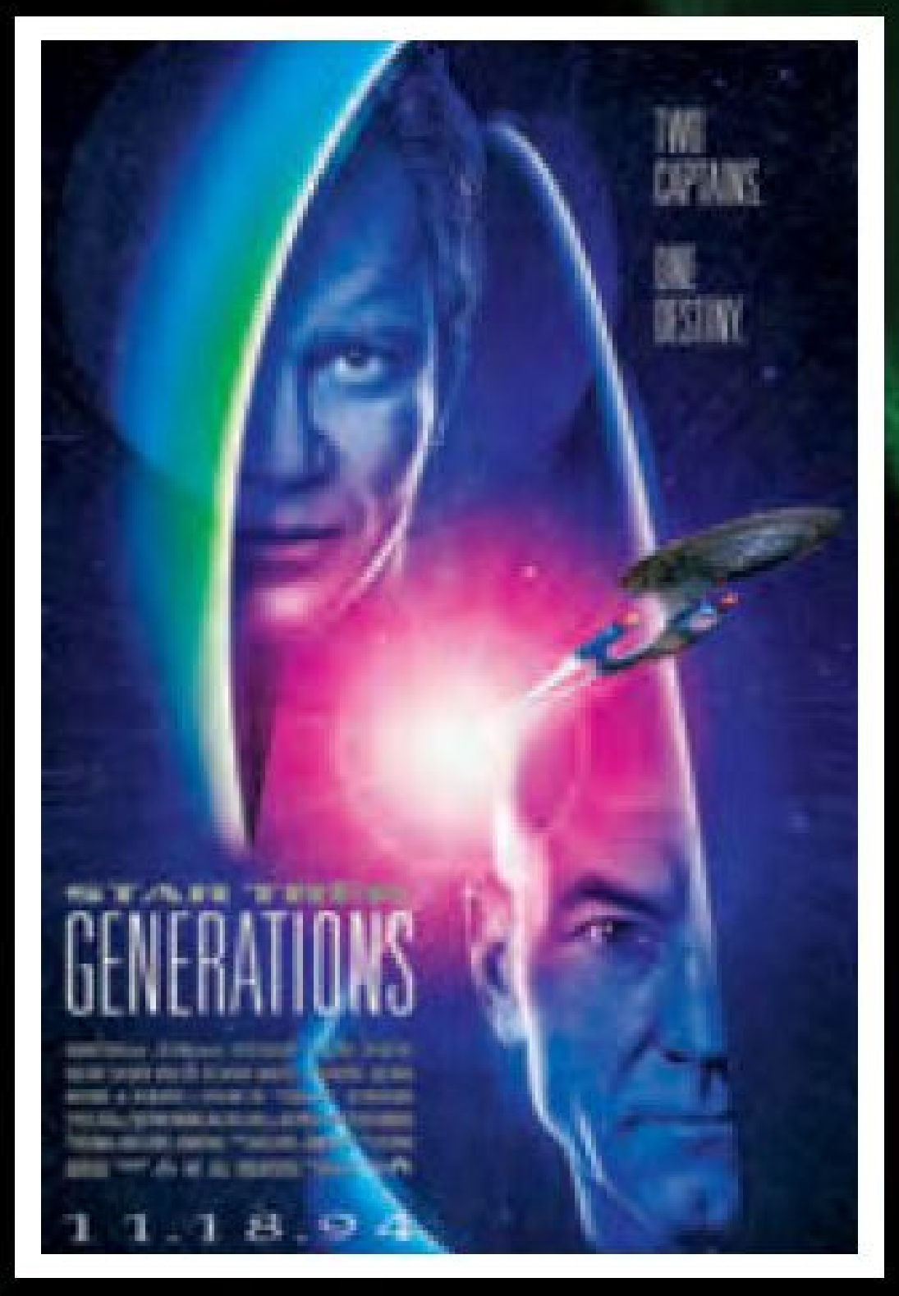
Despite mixed reviews from critics, it did well enough at the box office for Paramount to forge ahead with the next movie in the "Star Trek" franchise just two years later, releasing "First Contact" in 1996.

In "First Contact," the crew travels back in time — way back to the mid-21st century — to save the future. Paramount had a tough time finding a suitable director for the project and tapped Frakes (Riker) to direct. Although Frakes had never directed a film before, Paramount entrusted him because of his familiarity with the franchise.

"First Contact" was both a critical and commercial success; fans and critics widely consider it to be the second best film of the whole "Star Trek" franchise, after "The Wrath of Khan."

1994

STAR TREK: GENERATIONS



> "Star Trek: Generations," released in 1994, was the first film in the "Next Generation" series. <

Captain Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart, right) joins forces with his predecessor, Captain Kirk (William Shatner).

1996

STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT

RESISTANCE IS FUTILE
STAR TREK
FIRST CONTACT

The crew, including Captain Picard (center right, with Alice Krige as the Borg Queen) and Worf (Michael Dorn, bottom right), travels back in time to the mid-21st century to save the future after the cybernetic Borg (below) conquered Earth by changing the timeline. The film features a guest appearance by Alfre Woodard (top right).

Several cast members have been quoted as saying they enjoyed working on “First Contact” more than any other of the “Star Trek” films.

The third movie of the “Generation” series, “Star Trek: Insurrection,” was released in 1998 and follows Captain Picard’s rebellion to save the Ba’ku people from being wiped off the face of their planet in a top-secret Federation operation.

The final film of the series, 2002’s “Star Trek: Nemesis,” in which the crew faces off against a clone of Captain Picard, was all but a bust. It was the only “Star Trek” film that didn’t open in the top spot and was also the lowest-grossing movie in the franchise, pulling in just $67 million worldwide.

In his review of the film, famed “Chicago Sun-Times” critic Roger Ebert said: “I’m smiling like a good sport and trying to get with the dialogue...and gradually it occurs to me that ‘Star Trek’ is over for me. I’ve been looking at these stories for half a lifetime, and, let’s face it, they’re out of gas.”

It was no surprise to the cast that the film was poorly received. There had been tension on the set between Frakes — who had directed the two previous films — and “Nemesis” director Stuart Baird because Baird never consulted with Frakes about the focus of the film, which many, including Frakes, felt was an egregious misstep.

Burton and co-star Marina Sirtis publicly lambasted Baird for being unfamiliar with “Star Trek” after he had admitted that he’d never watched any of the episodes of “The Next Generation” TV series.

Although a sequel had been planned, the idea was abandoned due to the poor performance of “Nemesis.”

> "First Contact" was both a critical and commercial success. <

1998

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION

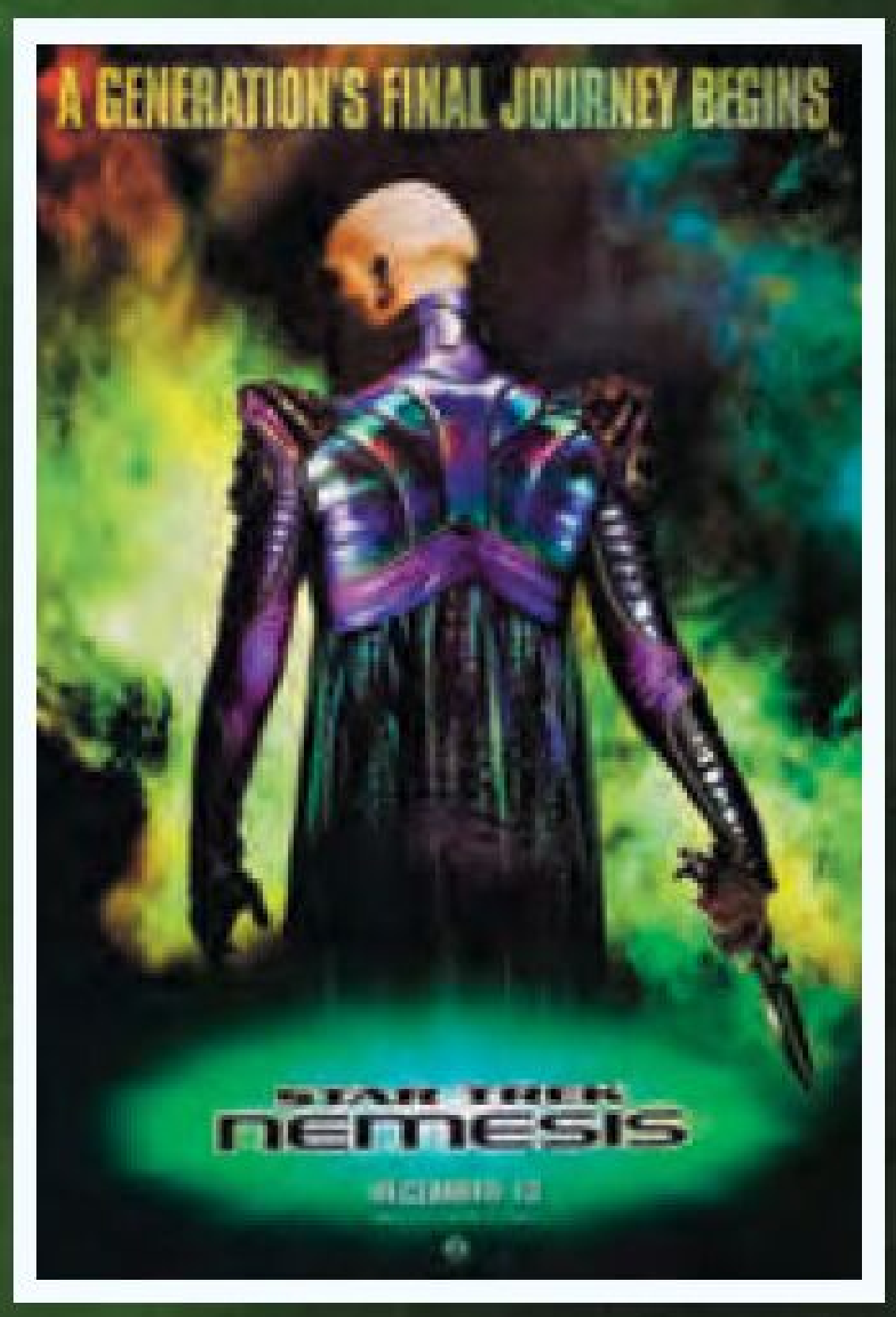
THE BATTLE FOR PARADISE HAS BEGUN
STAR TREK
INSURRECTION
12.11.98

"Insurrection" follows Captain Picard's rebellion to save the Ba'ku people after the crew learn of a top-secret Federation operation against the planet's inhabitants. In addition to cast members Brent Spiner (opposite page, top) and Michael Dorn (center left), F. Murray Abraham (center far right) and Donna Murphy (bottom) had starring roles.

> Released in 1998, "Insurrection" was the third film of the "Generation" series. <

2002

STAR TREK: NEMESIS


A GENERATION'S FINAL JOURNEY BEGINS
STAR TREK
nemesis
DECEMBER 13

In "Nemesis," Dr. Beverly Crusher (Gates McFadden, below) faces off against a clone of Lieutenant Commander Data (Brent Spiner).

> The final film of the series was the lowest-grossing movie in the franchise. <

ARGO

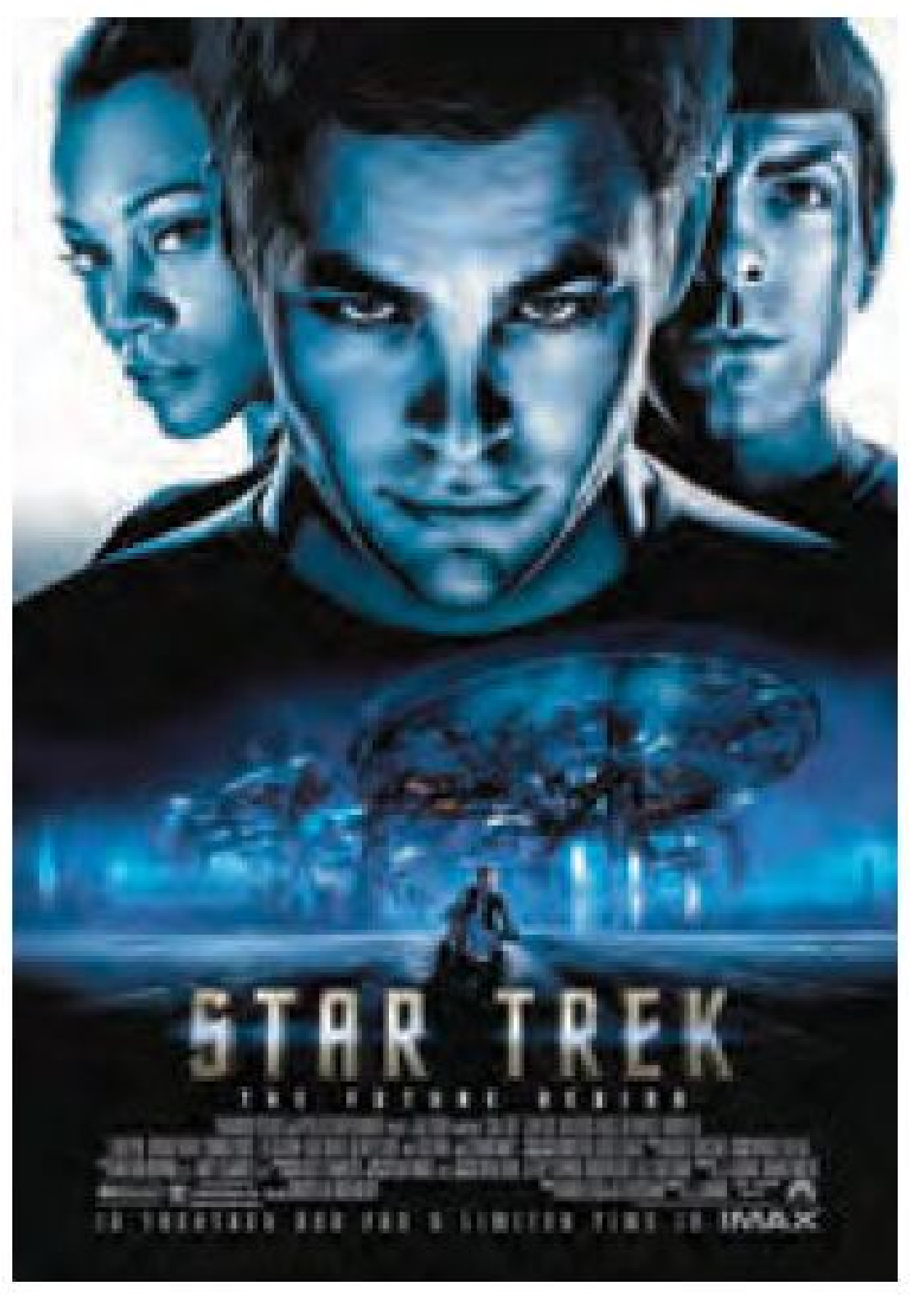
Star Trek Reboot

It was a formula made in heaven: a devoted fan base eager for more of the franchise featuring the original characters, a talented new cast and a compelling story.

2009

STAR TREK

"Star Trek" was a smash at the box office and a critical triumph.



THE FIRST OF J.J. Abrams' "Star Trek" reboot films, "Star Trek," opened to great anticipation and critical acclaim in 2009.

This film presents an original story in which James Tiberius Kirk (Chris Pine), Spock (Zachary Quinto) and Nyota Uhura (Zoe Saldana) are cadets at the Starfleet Academy.

When a Romulan ship from the future threatens Spock's home planet of Vulcan, Starfleet sends the USS Enterprise with Kirk, Spock and Uhura aboard to try and save it.

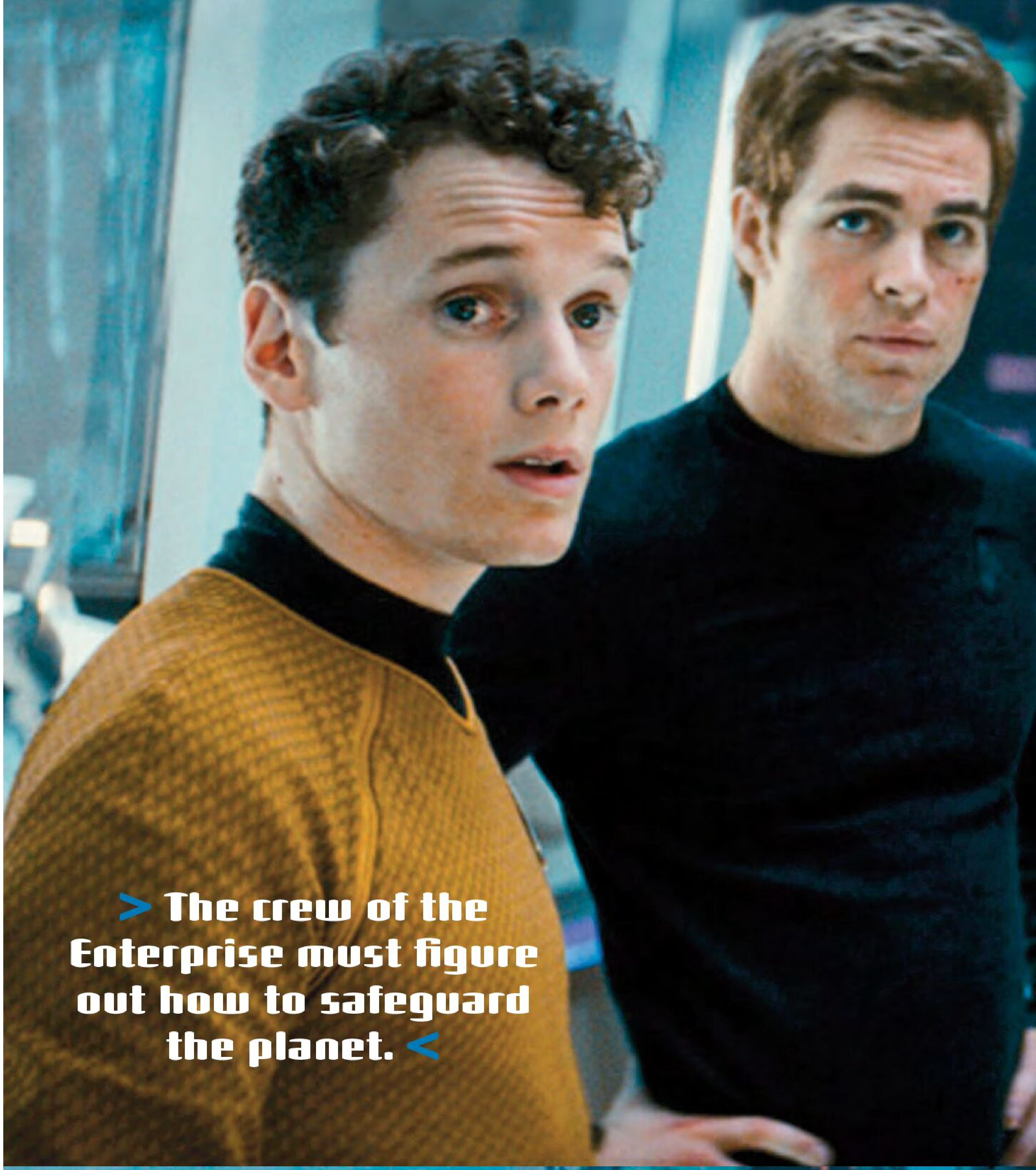
Despite their efforts, the Romulans cast a black hole that destroys Vulcan and kills Spock's mother.

As the Narada moves toward Earth, its next target, the crew of the Enterprise must figure out not only how to safeguard the planet, but also how to reckon their clashing personalities and get along.

"Star Trek" was an immediate smash at the box office, grossing more than $385.7 million worldwide.

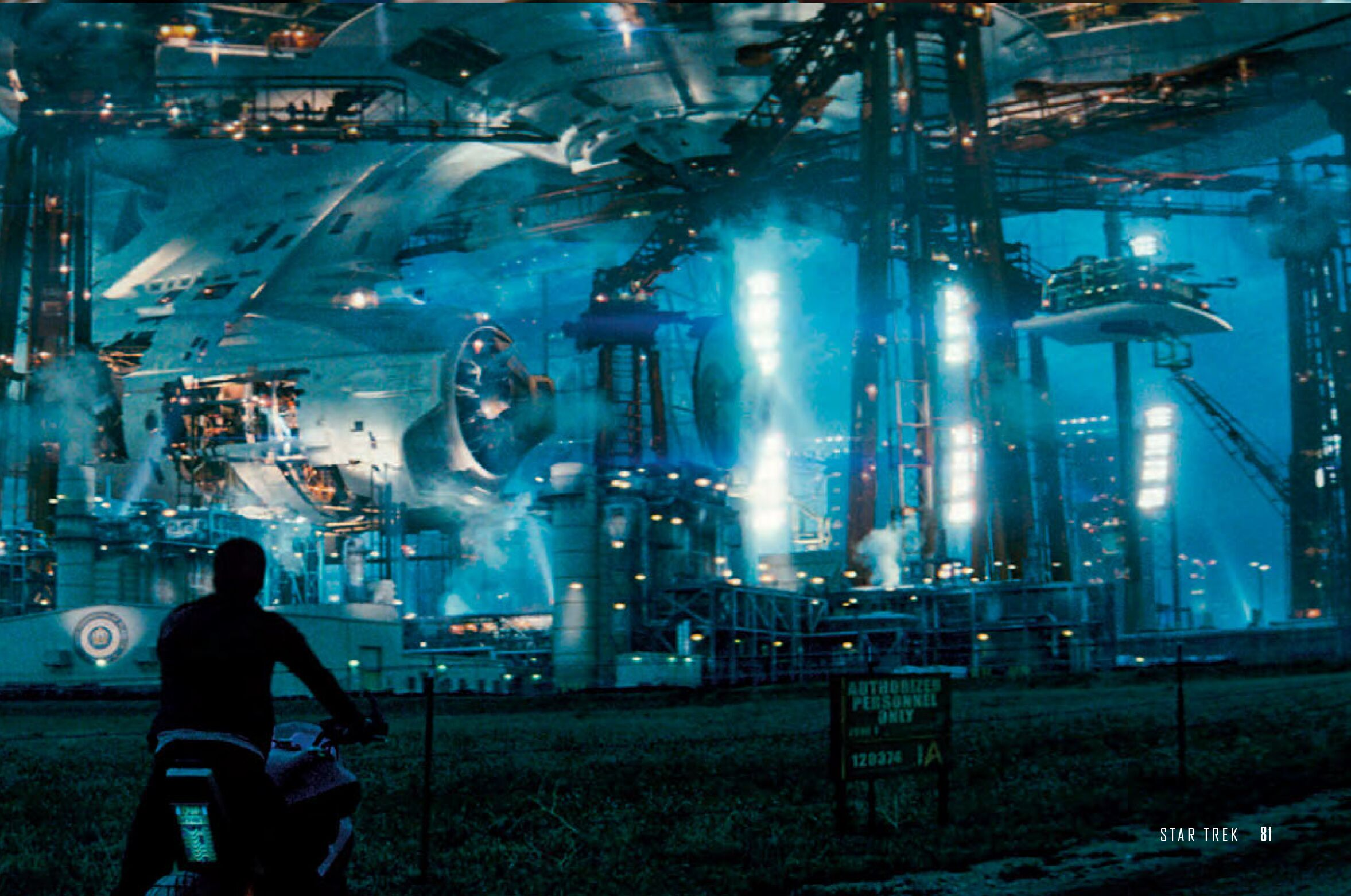
It was nominated for four Oscars at the 82nd Academy Awards and won the category for Best Makeup, earning the distinction of the first "Star Trek" film ever to win an Academy Award.

Critics also praised the cast's performances, the film's character development and the plot. Following its success, cast members, including Pine, Quinto and Saldana, signed on for two sequels, making the film the first of a planned trilogy.



> The crew of the Enterprise must figure out how to safeguard the planet. <

Top: A novice crew, including (from left) Pavel Chekov (Anton Yelchin), James T. Kirk (Chris Pine), Scotty (Simon Pegg), Leonard McCoy (Karl Urban), Sulu (John Cho) and Uhura (Zoe Saldana), are sent aboard the USS Enterprise (above) to save planet Vulcan.


AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
120324 1A

The crew joined forces to battle a Romulan ship from the future to protect Spock's homeland.

>TREK TRIVIA

- Actor Leonard Nimoy appeared in the film as Spock — from the future!
- To perfect his Vulcan salute, Zachary Quinto glued his fingers into formation.
- The sound of the automatic doors opening on the Enterprise is a Russian train toilet flushing.
- The original version of the movie opened with the birth of Spock.
- “Star Trek” was the feature film debut of actor Chris Hemsworth, who played George Kirk, James T. Kirk’s father.

Chris Pine

Before his breakout role, he was in a romcom flop with Lindsay Lohan.

CHRIS PINE WAS born in Los Angeles and comes from an acting family — his father Robert co-starred in the TV series “CHiPs.” His earliest work includes roles on TV shows like “ER” and “Six Feet Under” and the 2006 romantic comedy “Just My Luck,” co-starring Lindsay Lohan, a flop he described as “a cyclone of insanity.”

Pine, 45, got his big break playing Captain James Tiberius Kirk in the “Star Trek” reboot series.

“My first audition was awful,” Pine said in a 2008 interview, with “Entertainment Weekly,” because he couldn’t take himself seriously as a leader. But he got the part after he was given another audition opposite Zachary Quinto, who plays Spock.

Fortuitously, Pine and Quinto already knew each other: They worked out at the same gym!

After getting the part, Pine sought and received William Shatner’s personal approval to revise the role of Captain Kirk. Determined to live up to Shatner’s legacy, Pine pored over classic episodes and “Star Trek” encyclopedias.

But he didn’t want to simply imitate Shatner’s performances. Instead, Pine wanted to show Kirk’s “humor, arrogance and decisiveness” without relying on Shatner’s iconic speech pattern.

Pine says his performances as Kirk have been inspired by Tom Cruise’s role in “Top Gun,” as well as Harrison Ford’s portrayals of Han Solo in the “Star Wars” series and “Indiana Jones.”

Of his relationship with the rest of the “Star Trek” cast, Pine told “DuJour” magazine: “This family we built has gotten tighter, stronger and stranger; we fight more and we make up more. It’s a great marriage — we understand each other and what we all do best.”

Pine describes himself as a “spiritual agnostic” and is dating designer Keana Sky Wenger; the duo made their first major public appearance together at this year’s Golden Globes.

It took two auditions for Chris Pine to win the role of Captain Kirk. He then received William Shatner's approval to revise the character a bit so he wouldn't imitate Shatner's performance.

> "This family we built has gotten tighter, stronger and stranger. We understand each other and what we all do best."

Zachary Quinto

Quinto dyed his hair and shaved his eyebrows to play Spock.

BEFORE PLAYING SPOCK in the “Star Trek” reboot series, Zachary Quinto, 48, was perhaps best known for his role as the serial killer Sylar on the television show “Heroes.”

The actor expressed interest in the role of Spock because of the dissonance of Spock’s half-human, half-Vulcan heritage. Quinto sees this duality as a metaphor, telling “Star Trek” conference-goers that “he is constantly exploring that notion of how to evolve in a responsible way and how to evolve in a respectful way. I think those are all things that we as a society, and certainly the world, could implement.”

In his audition, Quinto was able to adopt many of Spock’s attributes, including his stoicism, and copied Leonard Nimoy’s way of holding his hands behind his back.

Eventually, he would dye his hair and shave his eyebrows for the role, commenting that strange feeling of the physical transformation helped him portray a half-alien.

And unlike Pine, Quinto’s performance as Spock draws quite heavily on Nimoy’s.

He told website trekmovie.com: “There is a certain way Spock carries himself and a certain way that he speaks and that he relates that is defined ultimately by Leonard.”

Quinto was born in 1977 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and attended Carnegie Mellon University in the same city. He is active in gay rights movements and dated model and artist Miles McMillan until 2019. He has since kept his private life out of the limelight.

> "There is a certain way Spock carries himself…that is defined ultimately by Leonard." <

Quinto was intrigued with the role because of Spock's half-human, half-Vulcan heritage, seeing the duality as a metaphor.

Zoe Saldana

The series confirms that Uhura and Spock are romantically linked.

ZOE SALDANA, 47, was born in Passaic, New Jersey, and has Dominican, Puerto Rican, Haitian and Lebanese roots.

Although she gained some fame in her role as Anamaria in “Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl,” she got her breakthrough as Nyota Uhura in the “Star Trek” reboot films.

Saldana had never seen the original series, but J.J. Abrams asked her to play the role of Nyota Uhura after seeing her previous work.

Of the compliment of being hand-picked for the role, she said: “For an actor, that’s all you need, that’s all you want. To get the acknowledgment and respect from your peers.”

She got advice from her mother, a dyed-in-the-wool “Star Trek” fan, and from the original Uhura, Nichelle Nichols, who explained to Saldana how she had created the character’s background.

Unlike Kirk and Spock, Nyota Uhura is fleshed out in brand-new ways by the recent film reboot. “Star Trek” officially establishes Uhura’s first name, which had never been spoken on TV or in film.

The series also confirms that Uhura and Spock are, in fact, romantically linked, a fact that was much speculated about but never truly revealed in earlier iterations of “Star Trek.”

Saldana is well-known for playing Gamora in the Guardians of the Galaxy series, and took home an Oscar in 2025 for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role in Emilia Pérez. She is married to Italian artist Marco Perego.

> “For an actor, that’s all you need, that’s all you want. To get the acknowledgment and respect from your peers.” <

Having never before seen the “Star Trek” series, Saldana consulted her mother — a die-hard fan of the show — and Nichelle Nichols, the original Uhura, for advice on how to play the role.

2013

STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS

Captain Kirk is almost killed by Khan in the second film of the trilogy.

STAR TREK
INTO DARKNESS

"STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS," the second film in the trilogy, is set one year after the events of "Star Trek."

When the commanding officer of the Enterprise and James T. Kirk's mentor is killed by renegade Starfleet operative John Harrison (Benedict Cumberbatch), Kirk must seek retribution.

He leads Spock and Nyota Uhura onto Kronos, the home of the hostile Klingons, where Harrison is hiding. There, Harrison reveals his own true identity as Khan, a genetically engineered superhuman who has been awakened from a 300-year "sleep."

The ruthless and untrustworthy Khan attempts to destroy Starfleet headquarters and nearly kills Kirk in the process. Can the crew of the Enterprise save Kirk while subduing the humanoid Khan?

"Star Trek Into Darkness" was a box-office success and received positive reviews, but was considered more controversial and critical by "Star Trek" fans, who felt it strayed too far from canon in certain respects.

Nevertheless, the 2013 film grossed more than $467 million worldwide, making it the highest-grossing "Star Trek" film ever.

When Kirk's predecessor is killed, the crew seeks retribution in "Star Trek Into Darkness."

USS
NCC-1701

Captain Kirk, Uhura and Spock are on a mission to subdue genetically engineered superhuman Khan (Benedict Cumberbatch, below left).

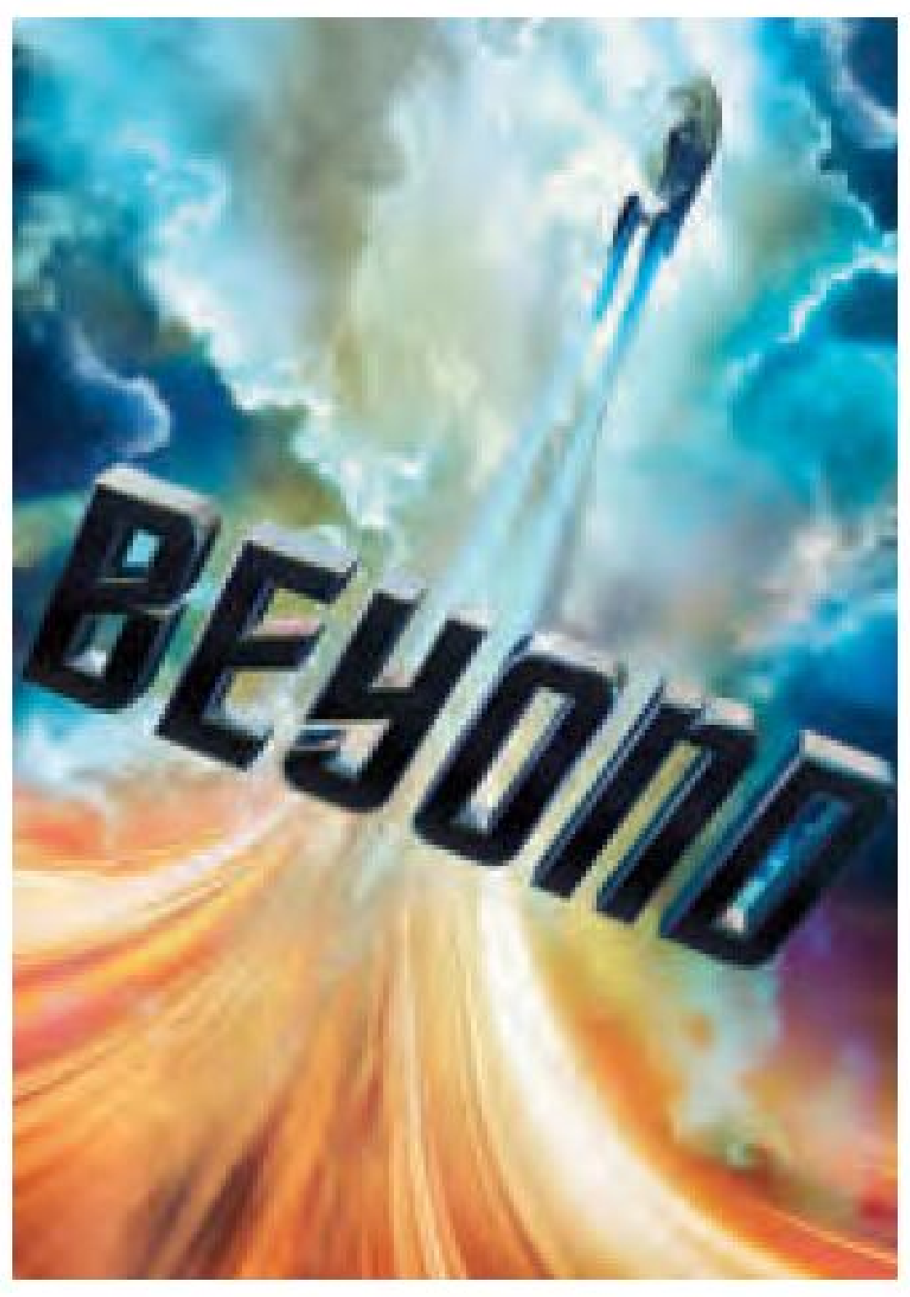
> "Into Darkness" was the highest-grossing "Star Trek" film ever. <

>TREK TRIVIA

- This film was Leonard Nimoy's final acting role before his death in 2015 at age 83.
- J.J. Abrams pitched Benedict Cumberbatch's role to him as a combination of the Joker ("The Dark Knight"), Hannibal Lecter ("The Silence of the Lambs") and Jack Torrance ("The Shining").
- "Into Darkness" was the first "Star Trek" movie ever to be filmed outside of the United States. Some scenes were shot in Iceland.
- One of the shuttles is named Takei, a nod to George Takei, who originally played Hikaru Sulu.
- Film goof! When the Klingons are attacked, they shout "nuqneH" several times. This word is a Klingon greeting word meaning "hello" and completely inappropriate in this context.

2016

STAR TREK BEYOND



THE THIRD FILM in the Star Trek reboot series, "Star Trek Beyond" opened in July. The film is set three years into a five-year mission and the USS Enterprise, still commanded by Captain James T. Kirk, arrives at Starbase Yorktown to resupply the ship and allow the tired crew some rest and relaxation.

But soon the Enterprise is dispatched on a rescue mission that turns into an ambush led by alien commander, Krall, played by new addition to the cast, Idris Elba.

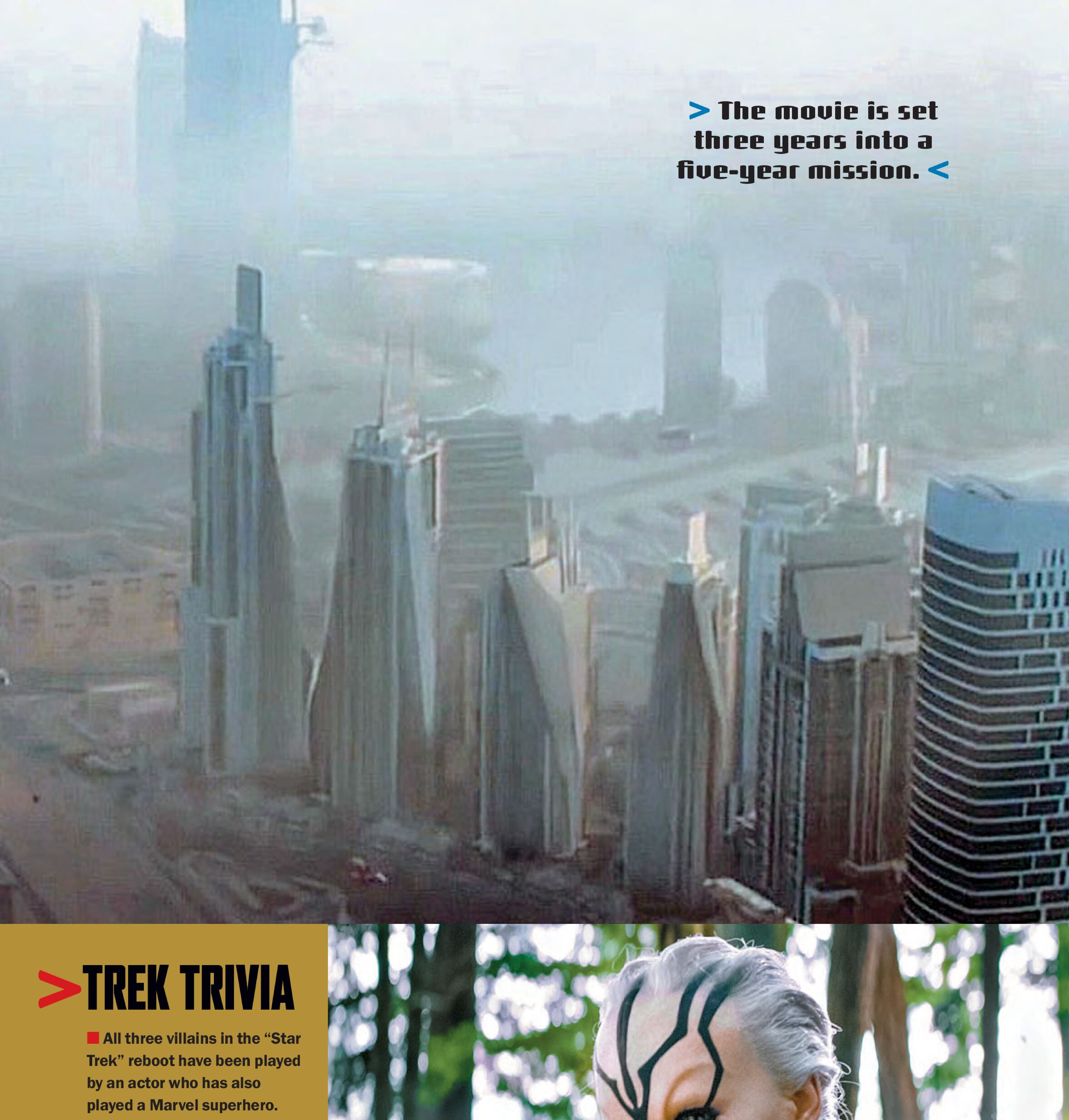
"Beyond" marks one of the final film appearances of Anton Yelchin, who died in a car accident a month before its release. And word is that "Star Trek Beyond" might be Zachary Quinto's last turn as Spock, and that Benedict Cumberbatch might return to reprise his role as Khan in the next reboot chapter.

The film grossed $128 million at the box office and Rotten Tomatoes raved that "Star Trek Beyond continues the franchise's post-reboot hot streak with an epic sci-fi adventure that honors the series' sci-fi roots without skimping on the blockbuster action."

The Enterprise is under attack by a group of powerful reptilian aliens, led by evil Krall, portrayed by Idris Elba.

> Fifty years after the birth of the franchise, the latest film, “Star Trek Beyond,” scores at the box office. <

Karl Urban (below) plays Dr. Leonard “Bones” McCoy and Sofia Boutella (far right) plays a warrior character named Jaylah in the latest film of the reboot series, “Star Trek Beyond.”



> The movie is set three years into a five-year mission. <

>TREK TRIVIA

All three villains in the "Star Trek" reboot have been played by an actor who has also played a Marvel superhero.

Eric Bana from "Star Trek" (2009) had previously played Bruce Banner in "Hulk." Benedict Cumberbatch played Dr. Stephen Strange in "Doctor Strange" (2016) and "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" (2022). And Idris Elba portrayed Heimdall in the multiple films about the Marvel Universe.

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